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# *Miladi*

*Clara E. Laughlin*



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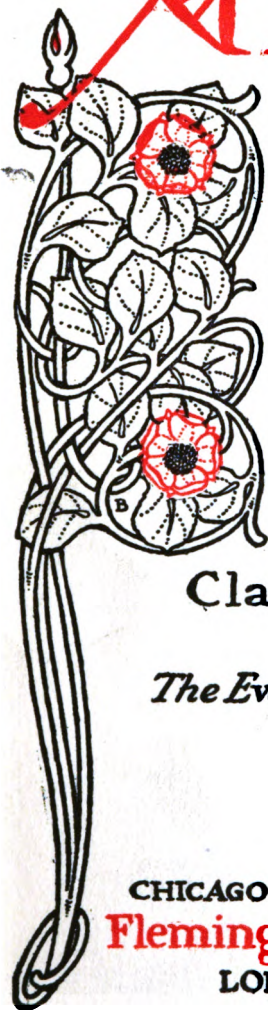
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# *Miladi*



# "MILADI"



Being Sundry Little Chapters  
Devoted to Your Day-Dreams,  
Dear Miladi, and Your Realiza-  
tions, -Harking Back to Your  
Education, Your Experience in  
the Industrial World and Your  
Decision in Favor of the Claims  
of Home, and Coming Down  
to the Development of Your  
Love, the Building of Your  
House o' Dreams, and Your  
Motherhood.

by

Clara E. Laughlin

author of

*The Evolution of a Girl's Ideal*



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LONDON · EDINBURGH



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William R. Ware

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October

To  
A. R. R.  
and  
A. C. B.  
*Friends of my Girlhood and  
Womanhood, and  
each in her own way  
an ideal "Miladi."*



## CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE HEROINES OF MILADI . . .	7
II. INDUSTRIAL MILADI . . . . .	23
III. MILADI AND THE "HAND-MADE" WOMAN . . . . .	37
IV. THE SERVICE PROBLEM OF MILADI	55
V. THE EDUCATION OF MILADI . . .	69
VI. THE DOMESTIC RELATIONS OF MILADI . . . . .	85
VII. THE FOREIGN RELATIONS OF MILADI	103
VIII. PAYING THE PRICE . . . . .	117
IX. THE FOURFOLD LOVE OF MILADI	131
X. MILADI'S HOUSE O' DREAMS . . .	147
XI. CONFLICTING TENDENCIES . . .	169
XII. THE MOTHERHOOD OF MILADI . .	187



# *The Heroines of Miladi*



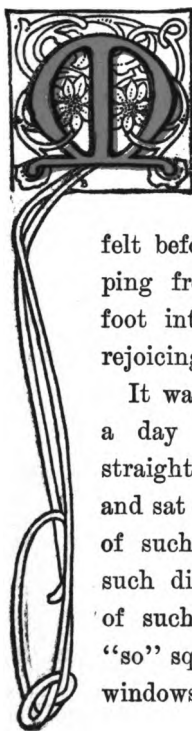
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# Miladi

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## CHAPTER I

### THE HEROINES OF MILADI



MILADI"! Can't you shut your eyes, and think a moment, and remember when and where that word first thrilled you? And wasn't it a delicious thrill, the like of which you had never felt before, save when Cinderella, stepping from her sooty corner, put her foot into the tiny slipper and rode off, rejoicing, with the Prince?

It was "after school," wasn't it? on a day when you should have gone straight home with your bag of books and sat down to figure how many bricks, of such a size, would build a wall of such dimensions, or how much paper, of such a width, would paper a room "so" square, with "so" many doors and windows. What a guilty little con-



science you had, weighed upon by those bricks and that wall-paper! And with what a fearful pleasure you sat down, or, perhaps, sprawled your awkward, growing length on floor or sofa—the voices of the children at play in the street having no power to make you feel forlorn, as they had at your “practice-time,” when you put so much self-commiseration into your rendition of “The Mocking-Bird” that it sounded like “General Somebody’s Funeral March,” which was also in your repertoire.

Where did you get that green cloth-covered volume? Can you remember? Had it belonged to your mother in her romantic days, or to one of your maiden aunts with a relish for romance, and had you unearthed it on a rainy-day rummage in the garret? Or had a girl you knew lent it to you with ardent commendations? Perhaps you had selected it from a library, public or like one I used to patronize, far beyond my means, where one might hire a book for three days for five cents. Ah, but it was a small price to pay for such transports! I’ve paid a heap more, many times, for far less joy.

Think of it! For five cents, to forget that wall-paper and those horrid bricks, to forget that you wore a "made-over" plaid dress that your soul loathed, to forget that your hair didn't curl, and that you had to make your bed every morning, and mend your stockings on Saturdays, and eat soup for your dinner whether you liked it or not (because it would "make you grow")—to forget, in short, that you belonged to a workaday order of things at all, and to lose yourself in a place called "The Riviera," (which you couldn't have "bounded" in geography class, to save your life!) where people lived in villas and kept French maids, and wore "parures" of diamonds (what *is* a "parure"? I've never heard of one since I left those days behind me).

It was a small price, I say (either the five cents or the sense of guilt), to pay for such a transition. The little boy you used to envy as you read about him and his "wishing carpet," that carried him whithersoever he desired, was not so far ahead of you in transportational facilities. And think of traveling without fatigue, and without meeting a

single plebeian or unprepossessing person! How calm it always was for those yachts on the Mediterranean! How the moon always shone by night and the sun by day, without interregnum of gray skies or black! No one was ever seasick. The sea air never took the curl out of Miladi's ringlets nor out of her feathers, and on warm, moonlit summer evenings there were never any mosquitoes. The Dowager Duchess never indulged too much at dinner, the Countess's satin evening gown never looked as if it ought to go to the cleaner's, and freckles never perched on the Grecian nose of the heroine, Miladi.

It was a great deal of perfection, and oh! so wondrous cheap. Only once again, I opine, shall we get so much, without money and without price, and that will be when we are little children again, admitted behind jasper walls, through gates of pearl, because we believe much and have forgotten worldly-wisdom.

But I am straying from Miladi! It was the French maid, you will remember; Dora, the lodge-keeper's daughter, had married the earl whose castle gates her father 'tended (it was only

another version of the immortal Cinderella, you see!) and gone to the Riviera on her honeymoon. On the way, they had stopped, she and the earl, in Paris, long enough to acquire the "parure," some twenty trunks of Paris frocks and bonnets and lingerie, and a French maid. (How you gasped with delight and forgot the "made-over" plaid, in contemplation of that lavish buying, so easily accomplished that the 'tiring wand of the fairy godmother seemed scarcely more expeditious.) And it was on the first night of the French maid's service that she inquired of Countess Dora:

"Which gown will Miladi wear? The white satin embroidered in pearls, or the pink crepe lisse, perhaps, with festoons of rosebuds, or Miladi's black tulle which, with diamonds, shall make Miladi with her marble shoulders the most beautiful of all?"

Ah, me! was it any wonder the title appealed to you, when the weight of glory it carried with it was so great? And perhaps, as you tried to think how it would seem to be called Miladi and asked to choose between such ravishing confec-

tions for wear to the grand opera, you heard your mother calling you:

“Jay-néy, Jáy-ney!” and before you had found out which gown Miladi wore that night, you had to lay down the Book Beautiful and admit, to your mother, that you hadn’t darned your stockings, yet!

Ah, “Miladi, Miladi!” There was your ideal—in the land of yachts and villas, of silver moonlight and golden sunshine, of diamonds and earls, and of French maids who not only darned your stockings for you, but combed your hair, and praised your beauty the while! And while your earnest, hard-working mother strove mightily to make you a practical, helpful, self-reliant little maid, meet for life’s struggle in the station wherein you were born, *there*, far, far from her ken (unless she had not forgotten her own dreams at fourteen) was the land of your heart’s desire. And now you are a woman, grown, and have come a long, long way since you wore that plaid dress and dreamed dreams of “Miladi”—not so far in years, perhaps, as in feeling, for up-stairs in your garret, hiding from you and your mending

basket, is a lank, growing Janey of your own, revelling in a "Miladi" of some sort, according to her taste and the fashions of her day. For there are fashions in heroines as in everything else, and you can tell the kind of heroine your Janey's adoring, by the way she acts. If the heroine's "a great belle, a sad flirt" (which they mostly are, nowadays, unless they're women with a past), your Janey's emulation of her is hard to bear. It is hard for you, holding such high hopes for her, to suffer her to "frizzle" her hair and roll her eyes, to mistake wilfulness for winsomeness, capriciousness for charm, to think a woman's first prerogative is conquest and never to suspect that it is sacrifice. But you must bear with this, as you bear with her lankness and her awkwardness, her pimples and her "growing" laziness. She will outgrow them all in good time, please God! just as you outgrew them.

You entertain no wistfulness, now, for the fortunes of "Miladi"; you have learned to balance her poor "parure" against such jewels as Cornelia wore as mother of the Gracchi, and you wouldn't exchange your dear, drudging John for any

"Milord" that ever sailed the Mediterranean Sea in his palatial yacht. Life, and your woman-heart, have long since taught you that it isn't gowns that make glory, nor yet diamonds, nor titles, nor the blue of Naples Bay, nor the sunshine of the Riviera—but love, and sacrifice, and service.

Perhaps your Janey's heroine is athletic, whereas yours was languid; perhaps "Miladi" in the novels of to-day isn't a lodge-keeper's daughter married to an earl, but a strenuous young woman straining through unrest to a "career." It is of small consequence! The differences are but superficial, at best, taking their color from the times. Underneath is the eternal feminine which is always to be reckoned with in one eternal way.

Your idea of feminine charm once centered in a much-beruffled dress, a parasol, a garden party, and a hammock under the trees. Your Janey's idea inclines toward the broiling golf links, a short skirt, stout boots, and sleeves rolled up above her dark-brown elbows. But love, when it comes, will mean very much the same to her that it meant to you, and will impel her to the

same sweet surrender, the same humbleness and gentleness and abnegation, and bring to her the same problems, the same tremulous uncertainties and grave questionings. This it is that reassures you as you hover over Janey's tender youth. You know that in all likelihood you will not be by her to the end, and that if you were, your special experiences would not provide the wisdom with which to meet hers. For one thing, she cannot grow wise by your experience, but must struggle to wisdom through her own. And for another thing, life will not come to her in particular as it has come to you; in general it will be the same, if Janey be a good woman, but in particular it will be different, just as, in particular, Janey's "Miladi" is different from your own. You can't prepare her—couldn't even if you had the foresight—for the special climaxes of her individual life, any more than, teaching her arithmetic, you can foresee in just what problems she will use it; but you can search your own heart and know that the guiding principles which have marked its course will be the guiding principles of Janey's. And Janey, who stands quite apart



from you now, in the eternal heterodoxy of youth opposed to the eternal conservatism of age, will stand almost exactly where you now stand, only a step in advance to mark the progress of a generation, when she is your age, and, up in her garret, nursing an ideal she contemns, is a Janey of her own.

Kipling has made us all cry, wistfully, over *The Brushwood Boy*. I think a Choctaw or a Hot-tentot would scarcely feel himself excluded from the universal appeal of that most delicious story. We each have our beautiful, particular dream, and we long with an unutterable longing to meet some one who dreams that dream with us; it matters not at all that Kipling's young soldier lad-die called his dream girl "Annieanlouise"—each man who reads the story mentally substitutes Helen or Adele or Mary, and takes the brushwood piles as mere symbols of some home-leading lane he knows, or some crowded city rendezvous; and each woman who reads it, no less wistfully, hopes in her heart that some one, whose name is not "Georgie," but Andrew or James or John, meets her in his dreams as she meets him in hers.

The brushwood dream is nothing, the features of the story are nothing; it is the universal hunger of the heart after its mate, that makes our tears fall on the book like summer rain.

And it doesn't matter what you call "Miladi," or how, superficially, she differs from the way "Miladi" looks to your daughter or your neighbor or your bosom friend. What matters is, that whatever your age or condition or estate, you have a "Miladi" still, typifying to you the substance of things desirable in womankind, for when the beckoning ideal fades out of a woman's life she becomes old and ugly and "workaday," and unfitted for the lovely uses God designed her for.

Not Adam alone was made subject to the influence of Eve, but all mankind ever has been and ever will be made or unmade by the daughters of Eve. Seeing which, and remembering the widespread calamity inaugurated by their first mother, it behooveth womankind to hearken to no more serpents, forevermore, but to choose the fairest ideals, knowing that in whatsoever direction they set out to go, in that direction will their man-

kind surely follow. Ah, Miladi, Miladi! The apple of temptation is always in your hand, but the capacity for the most sublime reparation is always in your heart. Need, indeed, have you for good guidance! It's awesome business, is ruling! For responsibility increases relentlessly, with the increase of power. You have no mind to evade your responsibility (even if you could) or to abuse your power. You don't say that might is right, but you do say that might *ought to be* right, wherefore your motto is *noblesse oblige* and it is no idle motto with you, either, but a most active working principle of your life. Long ago, you dreamed dreams of a "Miladi" who sprang, fully equipped, into her glittering new estate, as Cinderella into readiness for the prince's ball. You saw only the prerogatives of her nobility, and comprehended none of the demands attached to it. To-day, you know better; you know there are more requisites to a true lady than either an earl or a "parure" can supply; you know that long, loving, faithful years must go to the making of a real "Miladi," and you know that you can be "Miladi" in any estate, irrespec-

tive of earls or gems, provided only that the will be in you.

In these little chapters we shall consider some of the problems and prerogatives of "Miladi," in a broad, general way that may, I hope, carry some weight of particular suggestion to each and every woman. They'll not be chapters of information, nor of exhortation, nor yet of personal opinion, but if they fulfil their writer's purpose they will be something akin to a looking-glass in which each woman may see herself as she passes, and by the humble aid of which she may straighten whatever may be awry.

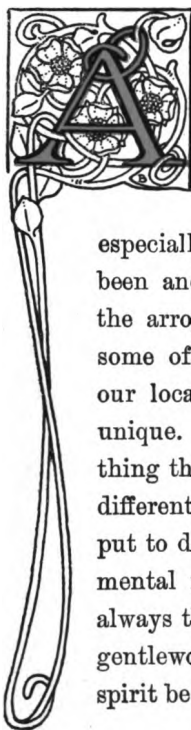


# *Industrial Miladi*



## CHAPTER II

## INDUSTRIAL MILADI



AS WAS said in the preceding chapter, there really never has been but one type of Miladi—there never could be. There isn't any "new" woman! The components of womanhood, and especially of gentlewomanhood, ever have been and must ever be the same. It is the arrogance of ignorance that makes some of us think ourselves or our age or our locality or our peculiar circumstance unique. If we're unique there's something the matter with us. Different times, different places, different social structures, put to different tests and uses our fundamental femininity, but the principle is always the same, and a gentlewoman is a gentlewoman, whether the test of her spirit be in tying her scarf on her mail-clad



knight and brave-heartedly bidding him God-speed on his crusade to the Holy Sepulcher, or in helping her knight into his shabby overcoat and kissing him, for good cheer, as he fares forth to earn bread for her and the babies. The brave-hearted and gentle-hearted woman is the angel of her time and place, whatever it may be, and the more we read biography and records of other times, and the more we see of many classes and individuals in our own times, the more we realize how absolutely akin is all humankind. On the surface is great variety, but in the heart is great fidelity to the few simple characteristics that constitute human nature as the five primary colors constitute all the pageant of art and Nature. To talk of a "new" woman is as ridiculous as to talk of a new color, when the fact of the matter is that we don't know as much about color as was known centuries ago, and, far from finding new gradations, have forgotten some that men knew when the world was young.

The true-hearted woman of our day has tried to be equal to the demands of her time, just as all true-hearted women must ever be, and if she has

been a little confused, now and then, and hesitated, and tried wrong paths, it mustn't be concluded that she has lost her way, for her good, true heart will bring her back again to the main-traveled road and keep her feet in that busy, blessed way worn smooth by millions of wives and mothers and sisters and daughters who have found the way straight and clear because they loved some man so much better than they loved themselves. Nor must she be held responsible for the unlovely actions of those, not gentlewomen, who have seized on her line of effort as the unprincipled and the unoccupied seize on war, as an opportunity, and by their excesses, their fanaticism, their lust for incident and notoriety, cast discredit, sometimes, even on the bravery of patriots.

Little by little, within the last hundred years, Miladi has seen the labor of her hands supplanted by machinery. She no longer makes her own butter and cheese and soap and candles; no longer puts the patient stitches of her toil-worn hands into not her own clothing alone but the clothing of all her household; no longer bakes and brews,

and makes and mends as she did in the days gone by. There is, indeed, scarcely an article of wearing apparel, of household furnishing or table supply that is not purchasable "ready to use," until it sometimes seems as if the skill requisite of Miladi is no longer the skill of her capable hands, but the economic skill of a good buyer.

And with all this change came a change in the life of Miladi. For one thing, household labor was no longer sufficiently demanding to occupy all womankind, and for another thing, the work that was no longer done at home had still to be done, nevertheless, and one by one Miladi sent her daughters out into the industrial world to supply its ever-growing demand for labor and to make them of economic value in the household. When home manufacture ceased and factory products usurped its place, money had to be forthcoming to buy the factory output, and the girls who found themselves no longer needed in the domestic economy, went out to earn. Factories, stores, offices, trades, professions, arts and the ranks of unskilled labor, opened to women, and not in labors exclusively their own, but in

those wherein they came into competition with their brothers. This gave Miladi a test of her spirit, not new in essence but new in effect. The world-old ideal of woman as the shielded, gentler half, the keeper of heart and hearth, was rudely shaken, oftentimes, by the new condition of woman as a close competitor in the marts of trade,—often an underbidder, driving men out of competition by the cheapness of her labor. This was a crisis for which, apparently, Providence had not provided when planning that wonderful bit of cosmos, the human family. Nay, Providence, when woman was designed, provided a solution for every problem, and Providence mustn't be blamed if Miladi is not always keenly alive to her full responsibilities.

Poor little Miladi! It was a strange situation for her! She, in whom was the instinct of unselfishness, created by God in the beginning and fostered by all good womanhood ever since—she who, in the safe shelter of her home, had taken, so many times and with such loving gladness, the “second best” (not menially, but with a divine abnegation)—*she*, to shut her teeth in the

bitter struggle of the industrial world and grimly fight for her "rights!" *Poor little Miladi!*

And while she battled with so much in the hostile world of industrial competition, vexing conditions were springing up in Miladi's home. "Mother," who belonged to the old order of things, had grown old or had folded her busy hands for the last time and left such a void in the home that there seemed to be no home, now, at all. And then that plucky little girl who had become a wage-earner as much that she might share with "Mother" as that she might support herself, found herself, in all her grief, confronted with a grave situation. Hulda, the brawny Swede girl in the kitchen, had supplied the strength for a good deal of creature comfort so long as Mother was there to direct and help and to put to every little service those last touches that only the genius of love can bestow. But without Mother, Hulda came to be a very behemoth of destructiveness and unimaginable inability.

It was possible to "get along," to buy food products ready to eat and clothing ready to wear,

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and to sustain life, somehow, but the grace had gone out of living; home had ceased to be a sanctuary and had become a mere abiding place. The sacred presence was not there—it was no longer holy.

Miladi's heart ached intolerably, not for herself alone, but for her father and brothers. The latter came "home" less and less, but poor Father was too old and too "set" in faithfulness to acquire the habit of going elsewhere. Miladi struggled. Her work, in the big world outside, was pleasant. She had paid dear for her start, her foothold, but now she had it, she was earning a brave competence, enough for now and enough for a possible by and by when she might need it and be unable to earn. Housework she had never learned, and even if she were not ignorant, the drudgery of directing Hulda, the tyranny of a thousand petty things, were enough to fill her with loathing. The rush and glamour of the big world had fascinated her; the routine of the household looked cramping, demeaning.

Miladi decided to discharge Hulda and hire more competent help. "Why, I can afford to pay

*two* girls, far better than I can afford to give up my position and my income," she cried, relieved at the outcome of her reasoning. Poor child! As if two "girls," even after she had them, didn't mean just twice as much care for some one—and that some one just twice as evidently lacking!

When she was a little girl and taken to orchestral concerts, Miladi used to think the conductor a mere concession to effect. Every one of those musicians was highly capable, she knew, or he would not be there. And since each must know his own part, and play "in time," of what use was the gentleman with the baton? When she was grown, and had had some little experience of the industrial world, Miladi came to know the indispensableness of an all-wise head, but she was slow to apply the knowledge to her household. When she did apply it, she tried a "house-keeper," but keeping a house, Miladi had to learn, is not making a home. At length came a better knowledge to Miladi.

"First," she told herself, "I must say if my work in the world is so important that I shall be missed if I discontinue it, and then, if I am able

to believe that it is, I must ask myself if I shall injure my fellows as much by withdrawing my activities from the industrial world as I am all too evidently injuring my father and brothers by failing to make them a home—and if so, to whom is my first duty. Then I must make myself understand that if I relinquish my salary and become an economic dependent on my men relations, I shall have, in all likelihood, far fewer indulgences, and an undefined economic status, an unestimated worth, swallowed up in the nameless and numberless duties of a housekeeper. I shall miss the stimulus of the great world, and my little world will seem very humdrum. I have learned to make myself a place, and to keep it, and now I must unlearn everything I have learned in the way of assertiveness, and try to learn something of the self-effacement which seemed to come to dear Mother without an effort—though I suppose it didn't! In a word, I must lose my life if I would find it—in the old, old way; for if I turn my back on duty, happiness will turn her back on me."

And so saying, not without a sigh, Miladi



wound up her little "affairs" in the busy world, and took up a new life to her, which is the old life of women.

Perhaps it was not just so that you went back, Miladi! Perhaps it will not be just so that other Miladis will return. A great many, a very great many, abandon the industrial army to make homes for men dearer than father or brother, and not a few leave the marts of trade for other reasons of many sorts. I used one incident as typical of many which are constantly calling women back from the industrial world to the world of home. The point I wanted to make was this: There has been an enormous exodus of women from the home, during the last three decades most particularly, but so far as we can now see it is not a permanent departure for many. Vast armies of girls make a sally into the business of the big world in the years immediately succeeding their school days; some stay, but the great majority are called thence again into the home life, to meet the never-reducible need of women in the home. The needs of the industrial world may be never so urgent but the cry of the

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home-world will always prevail with the major part of womankind; the cry of the man for his mate and helpmeet, the cry of the womanheart after motherhood, the cry of the desolated home when Mother is gone, even the ever-present exigencies which make a "lone woman" an angel of helpfulness in the households of her kin—these world-old and ineradicable impulses of femininity make it unnecessary that we should reckon much with "industrial Miladi," except as a potential and highly probable home-maker of the near future. There is, of course, a remnant of women who will never be assimilated into the home, but I think you will agree that it is only a remnant, when you come to consider how small it is in proportion to the number that are industrial servants of the many only temporarily, ere they become the industrial servants of the few, not for hire but for love.

But in the meantime, the experience so many thousands of to-morrow's wives and mothers are getting to-day in the world of business, is, if it sometimes works harm, working, on the whole, no little good, and the exodus from the home,

with the reign of the machine-made, is bringing about a most interesting and most significant reaction, which shall be set forth in another chapter.

*Miladi and the  
“Hand-made” Woman*



### CHAPTER III

#### MILADI AND THE "HAND-MADE" WOMAN



MILADI went a-shopping the other day. In the years when Miladi was an industrial woman she had to "shop" hastily, and it could not be said of her, with all her keen business sense, that she was a good buyer for herself, nor, with all her cultivated taste, that she was a tasteful dresser. She was a regular patron of the "ready-made" in everything, as taking the minimum of time and strength from her business interests, and, although she had a vague consciousness of looking very much like everyone else who was "ready-made," she had learned to accept the situation as inevitable, or nearly so, and not without its compensating offsets. Miladi had liked her work in the big world, and, being a

wise little Miladi, she knew that one must pay in coin of some kind for everything, even for love and for the privilege of working, and she paid for her devotion to her work by wearing garments without individuality and often without any special degree of fit or finish. But she had paid ungrudgingly, as the truly honest woman pays any just debt. The other day, however, she went a-shopping, as has been said, and she went in a leisurely, sauntering way quite new to her and, being a keen, deductive, as well as an appreciative little Miladi, the expedition opened her eyes, wide!

She wanted to send some bit of baby-wear to a girl friend into whose new home nest a daughter had recently come, and on her way to the department where infants' garments were sold, Miladi paused a moment to admire some exquisite white embroideries which suggested the dainty nestling she had in mind. A clerk, attracted by Miladi's evident admiration, moved toward her, and to her exclamation of appreciation answered, "Yes'm; they're hand-work."

"Not embroidered by hand?" gasped Miladi.

"Oh, yes'm—and they're from seven dollars a

yard up," said the girl, her tones rising with importance as if the value of the goods were due to her.

Miladi passed on to the baby-outfitting department and was shown a bewildering array of infant luxury. The plainer and less-trimmed the Lilliputian garments were, the more they cost. Miladi had the gentlewoman's idea of clothes, even if, for herself, she had sometimes, for some reasons, held this in abeyance, and she turned from the elaborately lace-trimmed and beruffled garments to one of perfect plainness but fairy fineness, with an "air" about its aristocratic severity that made it Miladi's choice. But the price amazed her. In explanation, the saleswoman turned to a fine little tag basted into the garment, on which was embroidered in script, "Strictly hand-made."

"You see, this garment has never been near a machine, let alone a factory," said the saleswoman, speaking as if a machine were pestilential; "and every stitch in it is of the finest, most skillful hand-work."

"Oh!" said Miladi, and paid the price.



On her way out of the store Miladi's beauty-loving eye was attracted by some exquisite garments for women's wear. A waist of soft silk that she greatly admired was a hundred dollars, although the effect was of extreme simplicity.

"Every one of those tucks is run by hand," said a saleswoman, "and all of those strips are put together by fagoting and feather-stitching, all done by hand, and look at the hand-embroidery on the front, and the sleeves! What makes it cost even more than all that work is that we'll make no duplicate of it; it's a 'model,' and it'll not be copied."

Half a dozen times before she left the great store, Miladi encountered the "hand-made" shibboleth, uttered, every time, as if the machine-made product were a crime against good taste. "I can see it's *the* thing," laughed Miladi, "by the way the salespeople pronounce it."

Of course, she had always known, vaguely, in some recess of her preoccupied brain, that the full purse and the æsthetic sense were constantly on the lookout for novelty, for the exclusive in design and the exquisite in handicraft; but she

was amazed, on going past a counter piled with flannels in many colors but strikingly alike in design, to hear a quite ordinary-looking woman say to an equally ordinary-looking companion:

"No, I wouldn't buy a waist of that pattern. You see what a lot of it there is; there'll be waists of it everywhere. I'd rather have some plain goods that isn't so noticeable."

"Now," mused Miladi, "if I heard that a millionaire paid a double or quadruple price for something in order to have an exclusive design, I should not be surprised. But there's a woman who does not look as if she indulged in even a flannel shirtwaist very many times a year, and yet she's just as minded to get something out of the ordinary, something not manufactured by the thousand gross, as if she were an epicurean plutocrat. Wise woman!" was the final comment of Miladi, as she recalled the purchaser of the flannel waist.

On her way home Miladi noticed an enormous signboard execrably painted with an underclad female wearing an unspeakable red hat. Alongside this apparition, in huge letters, Miladi, with

other passers-by, was adjured to "Buy a Poppy Hat at Cheap John's! Only \$2.88! Every lady is getting one!"

"Now that," smiled Miladi, "marks one difference between the most tawdry and meretricious standard of taste conceivable, and the first stirrings of gentility and exclusiveness. Hulda will buy a Poppy Hat, convinced that it is the indispensable thing, since 'every lady is getting one.' But the plain little woman in the store wouldn't have a Persian pattern flannel waist because so many other women were bound to have them. What are we coming to?"

A few days later, Miladi attended a little "sewing bee" of girls and young matrons. In her business days she had quite despised these gatherings, feeling sorry, in her arrogant young heart so full of what she called "great plans," for the benighted women who stayed at home and "made tidies and jelly," as she phrased it. But, now that she had joined their ranks, she felt that she could do no less than accept their invitation to sew with them and eat their dainty luncheon.

She found them all busy, and while nimble

fingers flew, conversation very interesting to Miladi wove back and forth between them, weaving a fabric more important, Miladi thought, than any their hands were fashioning.

"My work isn't very pretty," said one of the older members of the little group, making a comical grimace as she held up a stout little gingham pinafore, "but I've found that the inexpensive clothes one can buy for children are a bad investment. The material is almost invariably poor, in a low-priced garment, and the sewing! Oh, well! I could have endured the coarse stuff, but I simply couldn't endure the work. It was done by 'prentice hands, I suppose, and was simply wretchedly done, that's all!"

"Certainly," said another, "that is where the profit to the maker comes in, in saving the price of skilled labor, which is always high."

"And they 'skimp' on cloth, too!" broke in a third woman. "I can't buy my underclothes ready-made any more; they're so narrow that after they've been washed I can't move in 'em."

There was a general laugh at this, and when it had subsided a quiet little woman ventured to

plead that not all manufacturers made goods to sell and not to wear.

"No," admitted two or three, in unison, "but a good many do, especially those that sell cheap."

"The fact is," the quiet little woman went on, without looking up from her sewing, "that almost any of us, working by the wholesale to meet the needs of people we've never seen, will never see, would be inclined, after a while, any way, to 'skimp' and 'slight' as much as we felt we could without injury to ourselves. Sometimes, when I'm tired or out of sorts, it takes all the love and pride and patience I have to keep from slighting what I do for my own family, and if I were working for a sort of 'human mass,' I don't believe I could keep from slighting 'em."

"And when you buy things to eat, they're adulterated so," complained the matron of the pinafore.

"The law has adulteration pretty well in check, now," the quiet little woman said; "but after all, the law can't put *love* into a factory, and while very many factory products are so much more skillfully made than I could ever dream of

making them, that I should be a fool if I did not avail myself thankfully of the proficiency of experts, still, when it comes to the things I *can* make, I take a great delight in thinking that no one else could possibly make those things quite as well for my cherished household as I can make them."

"I'm going back, more and more, to home products, wherever it is feasible," said the young woman who had declared against "ready-made" underclothes, "they're not only better, but so much cheaper."

One girl was embroidering a white linen shirt-waist in a charming design of clover blossoms and leaves, and to some one who exclaimed at the beauty of the design she explained that she made her own designs. "Those you can get stamped in the shops are so common," she said, "you see them over and over again. And besides," she went on, "they charge a dollar and a half for stamping a waist like this, and that is nearly as much as the waist cost me, all told."

A little flutter of admiration greeted this statement. "A waist like that is from twenty-

five to thirty-five dollars in the shops," said another girl; "I priced them. And no exclusive design, either."

"Well," said a bride-to-be, holding up a bit of filmy nainsook, "a corset-cover like this, every stitch hand-made and hand-embroidered, as I'm doing this, is nine dollars, and mine, counting thirty-five cents for stamping and a few pennies for cotton, is costing me something less than a dollar. And aside from the cost," she continued, "I feel sorry for the girls who go into shops and buy the underwear for their trousseaux. They don't know what they miss, poor things, when they miss the exquisite pleasure of sewing hopes and fancies in with every stitch. It doesn't seem to me as if I could be happy in bridal finery that was probably made by some poor, miserably underpaid woman with bent back and tired fingers, who stitched her sighs in with the cotton and perhaps hated the woman who would wear the garment, able to afford such luxury when she could scarce afford bread."

Miladi was very conversant with the economics of woman's work as the thinking order of indus-

trial women discussed them, but she wondered, as she listened to these young maids and matrons, if the women who tried to reckon everything in woman's life and sphere by strict rules of industrial economy, didn't reckon, most times, without that highly important factor, the sentiment in the case. She knew what the advocates of "the larger life for women" would say to the bride-to-be,—how they would exclaim "Pshaw!" to her sentiment, and assure her that women who could embroider better than they could do anything else, made the underwear for the shops at a fair living wage, and when she did her own embroidery she was cheating some one of those women of her livelihood. "If you were doing the thing you can do best, in the industrial world, and commanding a fair wage for it, you could afford to buy that other woman's embroidered product and help her to economic independence," she could hear them say, and then all the arguments in favor of the division of labor floated through her mind and arraigned themselves against the "rounded" individual of many accomplishments.

Doubtless, the world is showing great favor to



the division of labor idea—every one to his specialty and on that dependent for sustenance—but doubtless, too, the practice is not producing well-developed characters, when all's said and done. One need not go to Tolstoi's extreme and make his own shoes, but everyone must see that the specialized life is a vicarious one. The race profits, most certainly, from the concentrated skill and wisdom of certain of its members; but, for those members who concentrate skill and wisdom, life is sacrificial—the individual suffers that the mass may enjoy. Whether the individual sentence himself to lifelong pursuit of the American moth, the cholera bacillus, the gerundive case, or the making of screws for some particular part of a watch, the sacrifice is the same in effect, a sacrifice of breadth to depth, of culture to dexterity.

The "new woman," her advocates say, enjoys a larger life, notwithstanding her specialized labor, than her drudging grandmother enjoyed with her mental horizon reaching (so they say) no further than the outer rim of her domestic interests. The woman of to-day, whether employed in home-

making or in the world of trade, buys her food almost or altogether ready to eat and her clothes ready to put on, and has time and energy left to study the politics of the world instead of new stitches in embroidery, to read literary papers at her club instead of poring over recipes, to engage in "settlement" and other charitable work instead of devoting her whole time to the wants of her own household. She hires her shirt-waists embroidered, her sheets hemmed, and her jellies made, and takes the time these labors would have consumed to read Dante and study economics and attend lectures on art.

But accumulation of ideas is not wisdom, and catholicity of pursuits is not culture. Education consists in the number of things one can learn to make use of—not ornamental use, for show purposes in a club-room or drawing-room, but practical use in the betterment and beautifying of life. Dante is good for a woman if he teaches her to love faithfully, to suffer patiently, and to put her ideal in the highest heaven, but he is bad for her if she uses him merely as an adjunct to her snobbery of education, which is much more despicable

than snobbery of wealth. Economics is a good study for her if she uses it to make her a better buyer, a fairer employer, a more intelligent tithe-payer, but a bad study if she employs it to no better purpose than to speculate, idly, about the financial policy of Turkey or the guild system of mediævalism; and art is good for her so long as it helps her to beautify her life, inner and outer, and bad for her as soon as it makes her think her life poor and mean. But of all this, more shall be said in a chapter on the education of Miladi. This chapter has no further object than to note the very general reappearance of the "hand-made," the significant revival of woman's handicraft, and the rapidly growing distaste of the cultured gentlewoman for the machine product of endless repetitions. Of course, there are many women who indulge this taste for the hand-made, the individual, without themselves joining the gentle army of hand-makers, but the renewal of reverence for the "capable woman" along lines of distinctly feminine craft, is not to be denied its portent.

There are many other signs, pointing the same

way, and under all, and over all, and in all, there is to be found a wonderful, new spirit—or no! it is not new, for we have said that the woman-heart is ever the same, but a fresh expression of the eternal feminine, and a most lovely one.



*The Service Problem of  
Miladi*



## CHAPTER IV

### THE SERVICE PROBLEM OF MILADI



THE PROBLEM of modern times unquestionably has been the reconciliation of the fine decree that all men are born free and equal, with the dull necessity that a large part of these free men must serve their equals in capacities more or less menial, and usually more, not less, unwillingly. Unquestionably, too, the best energy of our times has ceased trying to alter conditions in the mass and has begun trying to alter them in the individual. Furthermore, we have come to see that what needs remedying is not so much conditions of affairs as conditions of mind. For, be it understood, the honorable estate, to which all aspire, is not a state of being at all, but a state of mind; and of service this



is the truth, that whereinsoever it is compulsory it tends to be degrading, and whereinsoever it is voluntary it tends to be ennobling. The world has paid its homage to the great emancipators who have enfranchised the serf and the slave and made them no man's property; it is eagerly waiting to pay a still greater homage to the emancipators who shall ennoble the enfranchised slave by giving him a joy in his work. For joy in labor makes a serf a king, and unwillingness to serve makes a king a churl. As one rises in the scale of birth and breeding the holy obligations of *noblesse oblige* become more and more binding. There is an honor among thieves, we are told, but we do not need to be told that it is not the same kind of honor that obtains among gentlemen. A thief's honor is probably bounded by unwillingness to "peach on a pal," but a gentleman's honor entails an obligation to serve in proportion to his powers, not stopping short of his life, even, if honor demand its sacrifice.

Not how to abolish labor, but how to imbue the lowly-born with the knightly spirit of service—here is the problem of modern times, the problem

of education, the problem of social reform, the problem of poetry and art and all that aims at the ennobling of the race; the problem, too, and chiefly, of individual precept, for as society is not a mass but a collection of units, it can be bettered only in one way, by bettering the units severally, and that by the efforts of units, not of a mass. Plainly put, here is the problem for us all: Just in proportion as we believe in the dignity of honorable service, in the royal prerogative of *noblesse oblige*, must we exemplify that living faith for the benefit of that nearest associate of ours who holds labor a curse and is, in consequence, accursed in doing it.

Let the industrial world in general be a larger question, but the sheer truth with regard to the industrial world where Miladi reigns is this: A very little experience of the larger industrial world has proved to the best women the pivotal value of the home. Give a good, true woman a fair business or professional experience and she will come, just in proportion as she is a good and true woman, to see that life, to be wholesome, harmonious and productive of the best, must be

compounded of more than energy, more than creative or adaptive ability, more than mere force of any kind. For force directed without soul is brutal, and force directed to other ends than the conservation of things of the soul, is *not* civilizing. The mistake of too many is the idea that life was created for the display of force, whereas force was given man for the preservation and cultivation of life. A nice balance between doing one's just share of the world's work, and furthering the best interests of one's personal development—that is life.

Now, the soul comes by many a brave lesson in the thick of the industrial fight. It comes, there, by strength of sinew and sturdy courage and quick, clear judgment, and a large sense of the great human drama, making for kindliness and patience. But even these things are not all of life. They are its bone and sinew, but not its sweet graces, rounding out the rugged torso to beauty of form, and most of all they are not its spirit-bestowed breath, baffling all knowledge to understand and calling for all knowledge to cherish and revere.

When one sits in a cloister, willy-nilly, the energy of the great world seems the salvation of life. Conversely, when one toils, irrecoverably, in the human maelstrom, the cloister seems the only place where one may indulge in the luxury of a soul. Neither extreme is desirable; the golden mean is the ideal of us all. Now women, not singly but as a sex, had been too long cloistered perforce—chained to a dull round of duties from the rather mechanical performance of which their minds wandered eagerly to that large, free-seeming world outside, that world of variety and episode and delicious battle for place. Then came the era of the machine, the factory, the division of labor, and Miladi, freed from manifold domestic duties, plunged into the busiest world of affairs, battled side by side with her mankind, and side by side with her mankind went home at night, very weary in every muscle, physical and spiritual, to a domain governed by an emigrant servant girl, fresh from the harvest fields of Europe, but not so fresh but that she writhed under the indignity of having to do the work which her “free and equal” mistress

despised. Poor Miladi! How she remonstrated with Hulda, then with Nora, then with Lena, as the servant maids gave place one to another, and passed on to work in some other kitchen, or in factory or store (haven of the servant maid's fond hopes), leaving Miladi indignant that Hulda should be dissatisfied with "nice, womanly work in a good home kitchen," and aspire to a starving wage in a death-dealing mill or factory. Poor Miladi! Poor Hulda!

By and by Miladi, being a true, sweet, wise little woman, after all, and only temporarily foolish, began to see that whereas other avenues of industry, other branches of art, are crowded to suffocation and a starvation wage for the majority, the one great industry, the one consummate art calling loudly for devotees, was the very one she had deserted.

From daylight to dark, every day, vast armies toil and moil in the world's mart, that looks not half so excitingly interesting from within the vortex as from without; and at nightfall, every night, these great armies "break ranks"; wonderful working organizations, of which men and

women are parts like the infinitesimal parts of an intricate machinery, disintegrate into lines of weary stragglers seeking shelter and rest, seeking warmth and food and quiet, not for tired bodies alone but for fretted minds and despondent souls. What army can fight a good fight without a good commissary department, a good hospital corps, a good band of music, and a good chaplain? What army so unwise as to go to war without all of these? And who so short-sighted as to despise any of these important branches of military service? How many military historians have agreed that to the great Sanitary Commission of our Civil War, yea, more even than to Sherman or to Farragut or to Grant, our country owes its Union inviolate! At the front Miladi would have been a menace to her army; at home, in the ranks of the Commission, or at the battle's rear, in the hospitals, she was its angel.

One need not go so far as to say that she has been ill-come in the industrial army, for in many, many instances she has not; nor that she is about to leave it entirely, for she isn't. Sometimes she can't; she must stay at the front and fight for

bread and shelter, not for herself only, but for those dependent on her—God bless her and help her! And sometimes she is needed there, at the front, or in the ranks, more than anywhere else. But sometimes, when she can allow herself the rare, sweet luxury, she is, as we have said, going back home to take up, as a rejoicing freewoman, the very duties she laid down as an unemancipated slave, and to them she is carrying such a high and holy joy in the work, such an exalted estimate of its importance, together with such a warmth of sympathetic understanding of the needs of the worker, gained “at the front,” that one may confidently expect of her, in the near future, that she will show the world how all the gifts and graces God has vouchsafed to His beloved womankind may be brought into fullest play in the maintenance of the home—the temple of the Lord.

Consider, *Miladi*, that if the last decade or so has witnessed great strides in the conquest, by women, of one branch after another of the world's industries, it has seen also the most remarkable wave of popular interest in home-making that the

world has ever witnessed. True, Miladi need no longer make her own soap and candles, bleach her own linen, hem her own sheets, or fashion so much as the ribbon bow she wears in her hair. She has the organized, specialized labor, not of one country alone but of all countries of the great world, adapted to her needs and to the saving of her strength and skill. But if household labors are less heavy they are more delicately demanding; if home life is somewhat differently ordered it is no less an occasion for fine executive skill; if the fundamental necessities are more easily supplied there is an equalizing or more than equalizing labor in the provision of the countless "extras" demanded by our modern standards of living.

Recollect the contents of the most popular magazines of the last decade, glance over the list of publishers' announcements of new books, and see what an enormous amount of space and skill has been and is being given to telling the mass of people how to build artistic houses, how to furnish them artistically, how to cultivate artistic gardens, how to deck artistic tables, how to serve



food that is both wholesome and tempting to look upon, and how to buy and wear artistic clothes. The keynote of our modern life is in the high standards by which not the few but the many regulate their mode of living.

Now, even if necessities of life be wrested from the crude state for us and put on the market ready to use; even if the machine and the specialized laborer have made it not only unnecessary but foolish that we perform certain services for ourselves, there is a great artistic taste and economic knowledge and constructive skill requisite to gather from the laden markets just what individual needs and standards demand and to weave them into an "atmosphere" at once restful and invigorating, for the refreshment and inspiration of the family.

Think of delegating this to poor Hulda! Think of being angry because she is incapable of it! Why, it calls for the highest possible order of intelligence and ability and love! And when it is beautifully done, what labor is there of the outside world that compares with it in skill required or resulting satisfaction? Ah, no! dear

Miladi! You can't settle these problems of yours by debate, nor by research, nor by exhortation. You hold the key in your own womanly hand. There is something to be done with Hulda; there is everything to be done with yourself. And when Hulda sees, she will fall into line! She is rude and ignorant and silly beyond belief, with her "Poppy hat" and her notions of what constitutes a lady, but she will catch the contagion of your new joy as she caught the contagion of your former discontent. Be of good cheer! This tidal wave had to pass over the land for its cleansing, its soil enrichment. It had, in the nature of things, to carry great wreckage with it, more's the pity! But it's receding fast, thank God! And the time for the sowing of the new harvest is at hand. The day of unwilling service is going by. The day of *noblesse oblige* is at hand!



# *The Education of Miladi*



## CHAPTER V

### THE EDUCATION OF MILADI



BROADER (in one sense, and in another sense a narrower) education of women is coeval with the change in the industrial conditions of Miladi. As we have said in an earlier chapter, Miladi, freed from the necessity of being a "Jack of all trades" at home, gave her emancipated attention to what she probably called the world of culture and the world of affairs. A little, quite a little, excited was Miladi in those first fluttering flights from the nest of domesticity. The free air seemed so illimitable, the home retreat so small and confining, she became giddy in contemplation of her possibilities.

Then began Miladi, having boldly declared her equality with mankind and her

intention of invading mankind's hitherto exclusive fields of labor, to cast envious eyes upon mankind's system of education.

"We are the equals of men: we must be like men," piped all the Miladis, in chorus. "Our brains are as good as our brothers'! We will demonstrate this by entering the lists side by side with them and doing their identical work as well as they, or better than they."

Whereupon they first builded educational institutions of their own, modeled as perfectly on the plan of their brothers' as they could model them, and then, not content therewith, attacked their brothers' educational institutions and compelled them to open their gates to the invaders.

Miladi, often with not the faintest idea of what she might be doing it for, studied anything and everything that "looked hard" and masculine and promised to demonstrate her "equality" and help her to a vague something called "culture." Sometimes Miladi had a definite aim; she meant to be a lawyer or a doctor, or a professor, or a journalist. But oftener she went to college animated merely by a desire to "be educated," as if

only from the graduating rostrum, diploma in hand, could she proclaim her equality.

Ah, me! what sad mistakes Miladi made!

When, as a little girl, I visited art galleries, I used to be greatly fascinated by the men and women who sat about, making copies of famous paintings. Sometimes these copies were near completion, and to my unknowing eye, they compared more than favorably with the originals. For which reason their painters, I argued to myself, must be every whit the equal of Raphael or Rembrandt or Titian or Murillo! It never occurred to me that the ability to duplicate ranks below the ability to create.

Now, copying is not bad apprentice work, in so far as it familiarizes one with the approved masterpieces of composition, line, and color, but no one acclaims the copyist until he has forgotten how to copy and learned how to originate, how to be himself, and how to express the message of life, as he sees it, in a style peculiarly his own. As that prince of critics, Taine, put it: "There is one gift indispensable to all artists; no study, no degree of patience supplies its place; if it is



wanting in them they are nothing but copyists and mechanics. In confronting objects the artist must experience *original sensation*."

It is to quicken this original sensation, and to learn how to express it, that we study, and it is toward the better doing of this that modern educational efforts are directed. Everything, from the newest thing in kindergartening to the latest addition in elective university courses, tends toward the development of this original sensation, that is, toward a thorough appreciation of the individual as the first step in making him of value to himself and to the community.

Now, Miladi was only too eager to understand herself and to be of duly accredited value to her fellows, but she started wrong, poor Miladi! She made the mistake of thinking co-identity the same thing as co-equality; she made the mistake of copying instead of originating, of trying to compete with her brothers instead of trying to collaborate with them.

"For woman is not undeveloped man,  
But diverse. Could we make her as the man,  
Sweet Love were slain: his dearest bond is this,

Not like to like, but like in difference.  
Yet in the long years liker must they grow;  
The man be more of woman, she of man;  
He gain in sweetness and in moral height,  
Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world;  
She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,  
Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind;  
Till at the last she set herself to man,  
Like perfect music unto noble words;  
And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time,  
Sit side by side, full-summ'd in all their powers,  
Dispensing harvest, sowing the to-be,  
Self-reverent each and reverencing each,  
Distinct in individualities,  
But like each other even as those who love.  
Then comes the statelier Eden back to men;  
Then reigns the world's great bridal, chaste and  
calm;  
Then springs the crowning race of humankind."

So Tennyson saw it, Miladi, and so saw it every poet in all time; yea, it hath been the vision of true hearts since ever the earlier Eden saw the first man and the first woman go forth, hand in hand, to conquer, by love and labor, the world's wilderness. Due portion of sorrow for the past and of hope for the future, due share of responsibility and power was given to each, and if each performed as it was appointed unto him, a "stater Eden" would ensue.

It would be hard to say just how Miladi first lost her way and grew piteously confused as to her destination. But no matter! She is struggling back into the path of clear vision, and she is trying, oh! so earnestly, to fit herself for the great tasks that are hers.

That wonderful psychologist, St. Paul, defined the difference between the "natural man" and the "spiritual man": the spiritual man is the natural man transfigured by a great impulse, re-directed by a great understanding.

Now, there is a natural woman—speaking in the sex-restricted sense—and there is a spiritual woman; the natural woman is, broadly generalizing, the woman who tends to emphasize the essential qualities of her femininity into faults; the spiritual woman is the woman who tends to emphasize the essential qualities of her femininity into great virtues. The natural woman tends to make her frailer, more delicately-constituted physical structure an excuse for self-indulgence; the spiritual woman tends to make it an opportunity for the development of those exceedingly fine perceptions which her lord, with his "wrest-

ling thews that throw the world'' could not, in the nature of things, cultivate. The natural woman studies to make her beauty a lure, the spiritual woman studies to make her beauty an inspiration. The natural woman seeks to establish her rights, the spiritual woman seeks to fulfill her destiny. The natural woman asserts her individuality for her own aggrandizement, the spiritual woman learns the best uses of her individuality for the benefit of the close few and the more remote many who go to make up her life.

This, then, is the education of Miladi: First, to realize herself, as a woman; second, to learn what there is for her to do; and third, to study how to do it. No use to tell Miladi that this wonderful education cannot be compassed in a schoolroom of any sort, however mighty—that the wisdom of life cannot be pursued at any one period of life and neglected at any other. Miladi's education began, long, long before she was born; perhaps she doesn't often pause to reflect upon it, but she was born a post-graduate in some difficult branches of life, thanks to the faithfulness and zeal of certain ancestors. Per-

haps they were Puritan ancestors, in which case Miladi comes without effort by the instincts of scrupulous order in the disposition alike of her effects and of her living; comes, too, by a natural thrift and sobriety and earnestness such as she could not, if differently born, educate herself to possess, in a hundred years. Or, perhaps, she had Cavalier ancestors, who left her a legacy of temperament which her Puritan-born sisters must struggle mightily to possess, as she must struggle mightily to supplement her natural sunshine, her pretty graces of manner, her instinctive generosity and light-heartedness and love of beauty and all that's bright, with some of their solid virtues, their conserving strength.

If Miladi had a wise and good mother (and of course she had!) that wise and good mother had pretty good understanding, in a general way, of what was before Miladi, ere Miladi was out of her pinafores. The mother knew whether it was instinctive for Miladi to be generous, but almost impossible for her to curb her quick temper, or whether she had a quiet, stolid sort of temperament which led her into no temptation to rage,

but hampered her with a natural immobility with which she must wage a terrific fight if ever she was to be of ready sympathy and quick to serve.

Before she can take up her education where her ancestors left off, Miladi must learn, little by little, as experience teaches her, to "take account of stock," and know what she lacks and wherein she is rich and strong. And, very, very chiefly, while she is reaching out for the virtues that she has not, she must be vigilant that the virtues she has grow not into faults; for an ungoverned virtue, dear Miladi, is almost, if not quite, as bad in its effect on others and in its effect on yourself, as an ungoverned fault. Indeed, I sometimes think it is a more dangerous possession, for the faults you are looking out for, but you easily fall into the habit of letting the poor virtues look out for themselves. And oh! it's such a sad mistake, for virtues have a way of becoming very objectionable. Everyone knows that he must forgive his neighbor his faults, but not every one makes himself believe that he must forgive his neighbor his virtues, too; and sometimes the faults are easy to forgive, and the virtues are next

to unforgivable. How we have all suffered from some one's passion for order or cleanliness or economy, carried to excess, or from some one's gentleness developed to the  $n$ th power in undisciplined children, or from some one's unbridled instincts of hospitality, exercised without thought of who's to "pay the piper"!

Education, dear Miladi, is the power that holds virtues in balance and strives to overcome faults, as well as the power that expresses itself in skill or blossoms in the fine sum total we call culture. The base of it all is, as we have said, self-knowledge, and after that must come knowledge of what there is to be done, and finally, we must have knowledge what share of it is ours, and how we are to do it.

The mistake that too many make is the mistake of thinking that education is a kind of standard commodity, a given number of acquirements, a given amount of languages and science and literary acquaintance—which it isn't, for exactly the same amount of these things may make one person and unmake another. Education isn't measurable by the number of things one knows about,

but by the number of things wherewith one has learned to supplement native ability in the universal task, the disposition of life.

"The genuinely educated man," some one has said, "is not one who has merely passed through a great many different experiences and who has made the acquaintance of a wide range of men and things, but rather one who has formed the habit of consciously using the experiences he has already had, be they few or many, in testing the new experiences which come to him."

That's the test! And that's where Miladi, in her excited first forays into the educational world, made her mistake—reaching after knowledge of any kind, at any cost, without any sort of regard to her peculiar, personal needs, the share of the world's work appointed to her, or the use she might make of her greedily-swallowed but unassimilated wisdom.

More than sixty years ago, when the education of women as we know it to-day was undreamed of, Margaret Fuller, addressing her first Conversation Class in Boston, said:

"Women are now taught, at school, all that men are; they run over, superficially, even *more* studies, without being really taught anything. When they



come to the business of life, they find themselves inferior, and all their studies have not given them that practical good sense, and mother wisdom, and wit, which grew up with our grandmothers at the spinning-wheel. But, with this difference: men are called on, from a very early period, to reproduce all that they learn. Their college exercises, their political duties, their professional studies, the first actions of life in any direction, call on them to put to use what they have learned. But women learn without any attempt to reproduce. Their only reproduction is for purposes of display."

It was a severe stricture, but doubtless deserved. In our day it would, we hope, be uncalled-for. Certainly women have tried to "reproduce all that they learn," in our times, have tried to make their "new" education carry them into every kind of activity. If they have erred, it has been on the side of ill-directed effort to reproduce; they have accumulated without foresight and been obliged to disperse without wisdom, and when they had studied economics to good purpose, they learned what an unproductive diligence it was.

Nowadays, they no longer expect to take a citadel called education by siege; they no longer look to a university to dignify them; they no longer covet a degree, as a defiant proof of their

“equality.” They are reverting to the “practical good sense, and mother wisdom, and wit, which grew up with our grandmothers at the spinning wheel,” and to it they are adding wonderful new conceptions of their prerogatives and powers, the which have come to them through their broader education as its fine, sifted result, after many false, flurried estimates of what it meant.



*The Domestic Relations of  
Miladi*



## CHAPTER VI

### THE DOMESTIC RELATIONS OF MILADI



PROBABLY there is never a day in your life, dear Miladi, when you do not stand perplexed at some apparent point of divergence between your duty to yourself and your duty to some one of your kin or kind. You have the utmost *will* to do the right, but, try as you may, you cannot be quite sure which the right is, and the more you try to "reason it out," the more distraught you become. May I remind you how the great world of unreasoning, obedient Nature keeps the laws of life?

For all life, my dear woman,—your life and my life, and plant life and animal life, the life of greatest and the life of least—is spun out of just two strands, two primary instincts, the instinct that

Darwin called the Struggle for Life, and the instinct that Drummond called the Struggle for the Life of Others—that is to say, out of selfishness and unselfishness; and the test of life is the balance in which we hold them.

Now, in Nature's world, these two instincts are not at war with each other, as they so often seem to be in our world, but work together from the first. Biology calls them Nutrition and Reproduction, and means, by the one, all that tends to sustain life, and by the other, all that tends to transmit life; by the one, all that tends to self-preservation, by the other, all that tends to the preservation of species. And one of the most wonderful lessons of Nature is taught in the way she makes each of these instincts subserve the other, and both of them serve her great ends. Darwin found Nature a selfish Struggle for Life, without kindness, without mercy, "the survival of the fittest" its ruling law. But the great Christian evolutionist, Drummond, writing only a decade after Darwin's death, found the Struggle for Life only half of Nature's story, and showed how, from the lowest animate forms up,

it exists side by side with the Struggle for the Life of Others.

Now, dear Miladi, you are not, if you please, to imagine that I am trying to write a scientific paper, for I doubt if any one could well know less about science than I, unfortunately, do; and I am sure most of you who read these little chapters know a great deal more. But I have gathered great help from this phase of Nature's story that I am trying to recall to you, and I can't help thinking that somewhere among you there may be others, if only a few, who may turn from their bitter perplexity to find suggestions, if not inspiration, in the way great Mother Nature manages her complicated relations.

The laws of life, I take it, are fundamentally the same, and it is as true in our world as in the world of Nature, that we suffer quite as much when we transgress those laws through ignorance as when we wilfully transgress them. The fire burns your baby if he puts his finger in it, whether the poor, wee mite has been warned against it or not; and the consequences of our mistakes are never tempered to you and me



because we "meant well"—*are* they? And isn't it true that a large part of our moral perplexities arises, not out of our lack of good intent, but out of our lack of knowledge as to what is really required of us?

Well, in Nature's world, the first thing required of any creature is proficiency in the Struggle for Life—ability to breathe and eat and survive the rigors of climate first, perhaps, then ability to walk or crawl or swim or fly, according to its kind, and the ability to provide itself with food, to protect itself against its enemies—in short, to survive, to grow. Then, when the ability to nourish, to sustain life, is mastered, Nature demands the reproduction of life, bringing in its train a whole new set of uses for the abilities acquired in the Struggle for Life and required in the Struggle for the Life of Others.

Now, in *your* world and mine, Miladi, the relations between members of a family, young and old, are vastly more complicated, more diverse, than the same relations in the world of Nature. In Nature's world, if the young ever take upon themselves any responsibility of the old, any care

of them, I have never heard of it, whereas, in our world, the Struggle for the Life of Others includes, not merely parental struggles, but all unselfish effort in behalf of our kin and kind; all struggle that is not for the sustaining of our own life, the salvation of our own souls, is some part of our contribution to the Struggle for the Life of Others, part of our fulfillment of the great moral law of the universe.

And next time you are perplexed, dear Miladi, remind yourself of these two things: First, before any living thing can be of value in the preservation of its species, it must be of value in itself; and conversely, in Nature's economy, any value it has in itself must inevitably be of value to its kind, and to the world. And second, Nature, which gives herself wholly to the Struggle for Life, up to a certain point, does not abandon that struggle when she begins the Struggle for the Life of Others. Her history is this: She mastered one primitive form of life, then endeavored to reproduce it, struggling on to the mastery of a form of life higher in the scale, then reproducing that; and so she does, and so demands, in

all her domain, Nutrition, then Reproduction, Getting, then Giving, growing pains, then birth pains, in ever-recurring sequence. It never was required of the ant that it give birth to an elephant, but it is always required of the ant that it do its utmost to preserve the reputation of its kind for industry!

Once, Miladi, perhaps you stood where so many thousands of young men and maids have stood, at the crossroads between some coveted educational opportunity and some urgent need of your service elsewhere. People had called you "a clever girl" and prophesied that you would "make your mark" if you had "advantages." You had dreams, beautiful dreams, of accomplishment; college stretched siren arms toward you, ambition spurred you on. You were so hungry for instruction, for development, for opportunity, that the spires and towers of a university town came to be confusedly commingled, in your wistful, tearful vision, with the golden, gleaming points and domes of the City of Realization itself. But there were younger children at home who ought not to be "pinched" for your expensive educa-

tion; and there was a drooping little mother, growing old too soon under her burden of many cares. If you went to college you must shut out of your remembrance that tired, uncomplaining mother, who would, doubtless, bid you a heartier Godspeed than any one else, and the brothers and sisters clamoring for your help and for a thousand material things that your costly "advantages" would cut them off from. You felt your right to a "chance"; you knew that nearly all the men and women of conspicuous achievement had fought fiercely for their opportunities; you argued that if you were selfish for a time, until you augmented your powers, you could presently be unselfish in a way and to a degree so much larger, so much finer than you could be now, that it would be the part of unwisdom to continue struggling for the life of others with one hand, feebly, when you might learn to battle for them mightily with two.

On the other hand, there was the possibility that you might not succeed; circumstances quite beyond your control might operate against you; what right, then, had you to compel all your well-

beloved to "gamble on you," to withdraw all their present claims on you and put their trust in your promise to pay double, some day? What right had you to presuppose that when you were ready to pay, they would be ready to receive? It was hard, wasn't it? Perhaps it was the first time in your young life when, with the utmost will to do right at any cost, you could not determine what the right was, and you were surprised, and hurt, to find that there was no absolute guidance vouchsafed you, that you must wrestle alone with your indecision and stand alone by the consequences of your choice.

You had always supposed that, if only one could summon the *will* to do well, the wisdom would come with it; but here you were, with the mightiest desire of your earnest young heart, and scarce could you discern well from ill—certainly not good from best! What path did you take? I don't know! Perhaps you learned "to renounce, where that shall be necessary; and not to be embittered"; perhaps you didn't renounce; perhaps the call of ambition drowned the call to sacrifice; perhaps you are glad; perhaps you are

remorseful. I only know this: that whether you went or whether you stayed, if you followed the best light you had, you did the utmost required of you. For after all, it matters so little what we have, and so much what we do with what is intrusted to us.

Perhaps if you had gone to college, dear Miladi, and had a couple of years' study abroad, you might now be occupying a distinguished professorship instead of teaching a lower grade in a public school; perhaps you could have decked your dear mother in fine black silk from year's end to year's end, and sent your blessed father a comfortable check for books or a long-deferred trip, now and then. But, equally perhaps, they are far better satisfied to have had your sweet, daily companionship, your close association and sympathy and your constant, hovering care of them, expressing itself in a thousand little ways.

There was probably never a youth who gave up his dreams of a university career with so severe a struggle as did Charles Lamb; probably never a youth who withdrew his wistful gaze from the beckoning spires of Oxford and set himself to the

support of a more tragically-dreary home; but probably there has never been a man more loved, a man who has enriched all the world with finer treasures. Perhaps if he had gone to Oxford, if things had come his way, to some little extent, instead of always bearing so hard against him, he might have become a most learned critic (as, indeed, he came to be a most penetrating one) and put forth able dissertations on "how not to do it," instead of writing "Dream Children" and the "Praise of Chimney-Sweepers," and the essays on married people, on beggars, and on "relations." Certainly, if he had turned his back on that poor, mad household in Little Queen Street, as his smug and successful and odious brother John did, he would never have been the Charles Lamb the world loves so mightily—whatever "success" he might have won for himself as success is judged by other standards.

The secret of Charles Lamb's life was this: When he addressed himself to the Struggle for the Life of Others, he did not abandon the Struggle for Life, but kept the two struggles in balance, as Nature shows the way. He had to

abandon the Struggle for Life along the lines he would have chosen; the conditions of his Struggle for the Life of Others demanded that. But he continued the struggle for individual development no less valiantly than if he had been allowed to make it in university halls; he fought a valorous fight, every inch of his arduous, sacrificial way, for mental and spiritual growth, so that he became—untutored, ill-paid, overworked clerk that he was—a scholar to whom the master minds of his age submitted their writings in humble deference, as well as a personality so transcendently lovable that there are few others in history who are measurable unto him.

The mistake we too commonly make, dear Miladi, is in letting the Struggle for Life make us selfish, so that we shut our hearts against the instincts of the Struggle for the Life of Others, or the Struggle for the Life of Others make us careless of self, dogged in our discharge of duty, laggard in our pursuit of beauty Too commonly we seem to say, "Since I cannot follow Self to the exclusion of all else, why admit the claims of Self at all?"



Oh, fie! As if any life, no matter how full of triumphs it is in all seeming, ever followed an unobstructed path of glory to the grave! As if any one, could we only know the hearts of all, would ever be found, who had done what he *would*, rather than what he *could*! Or, as if any life of sacrifice and devotion could be worth anything to others if it be worth nothing to itself! "Nutrition, then Reproduction," Miladi—and not in two distinct chapters of your life, but every day, a hundred times a day—"Getting, then giving; growing pains, then birth pains," and so on, and on, and on, struggling, always, for a better self, that you may have more to give, and struggling to give royally, that you may have a better self.

You, whom I address, are so many and so diverse, I cannot touch specifically on any of the typical instances in which the true-hearted woman finds herself no less perplexed because she loves so well; but I do not need to tell any one of you that the way of life is through "the valley of decision," and that the hardest things that we have to decide, almost always, are those touching our nearest and dearest.

If I were writing for men, I think I should lay chief stress on the danger of selfishness; their life of struggle in the world of fierce competition tends, almost inevitably, to over-develop them in assertiveness, aggressiveness and all the qualities that go toward making and keeping a foothold in the world. They must live in an atmosphere of "every man for himself" (Natural Selection, or the Survival of the Fittest, they call the same bitter struggle in the natural world), and even their Struggles for the Life of Others are prone to take the material form of bread-winning. It is not strange if combat grows easier to them than sacrifice; theirs are "the wrestling thews that throw the world," and while strong men are often exquisitely tender, we must not make the mistake of thinking that the two qualities go together naturally; the strong man who is tender is not the natural man, but the spiritual man, after the manner of difference defined in our last chapter. And if man's effort, "in the long years," must be "to gain in sweetness and in moral height," while losing nothing of his strength as a provider and defender, the woman's effort must be, even as

Tennyson saw in his vision of the future, in the direction of "mental breadth," that she may learn to temper her love with wisdom, to reign both justly and with tenderness.

You, *Miladi*, come naturally by the tendency to sacrifice; long ages of womanhood before you wore a groove in the way of abnegation, and all the primordial instincts of your femininity set your willing feet thereuntoward. What you must struggle to do, is to keep a fine, true balance between sacrifice and development; you must give as much as you can, but you must be careful to keep replenished, for your own sake and for the sake of those you love; and you must know that to give love unthinkingly is as bad as to give alms unthinkingly—aye, worse; as much worse as money is of less account than love. Never overlook the fact that, whatever other talents may be yours, love is the chief of all delivered into your stewardship, and of it, chiefly, will you be required to give a good account.

Education, the day's work (or your life's work, for that matter), all art and industry and effort—what are they all, *Miladi*, but avenues leading to

this simple test of life: You, and your fellows—what have you done to strengthen and beautify your own individual self for all eternity, and what have you done to help others do the same by their individual selves? In the Struggle for Life how much have you gained, over and above your existence? And in the Struggle for the Life of Others, what have you striven to give them, besides their mere existence?

We have only one authoritative account of the final reckoning, and it is significant, indeed, that it shows us a Judgment based altogether on success or failure in the Struggle for the Life of Others—as if to teach us that that so comprehends the whole test of life as to make separate judgment of self-development unnecessary, redundant. Your relations to your kin and kind—only these matter, if we read aright. There is no other standard of life given us whereby we may judge.



*The Foreign Relations of  
Miladi*



## CHAPTER VII

### THE FOREIGN RELATIONS OF MILADI



FOREIGN relations, dear Miladi, are tremendously important. I doubt if it is saying too much to say that in the great cabinets of the world to-day they rank in importance over every other department of government. It isn't that we care so much more how we stand among our neighbors than how matters really are among ourselves, but that we know how much our relations with our neighbors affect the condition of affairs at home. For man is essentially an interdependent sort of being, and all efforts to regulate his life on any other basis have been failures.

Now, Miladi, national foreign relations are of many kinds. We depend on our neighbors to furnish us with certain



goods of their make and to furnish us a market for certain goods of our make. Besides this, foreign relations are concerned with the way we treat foreigners sojourning with us, and the way foreigners treat our countrymen sojourning with them. For another thing, foreign relations are concerned with the preservation of the balance of power, the restraint of allied Powers, in which lies the nations' hope of peace.

Unpleasant relations with any neighbor *must*, of necessity, impair any country's prosperity, and in these days, as in the days of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, we find nations interchanging costly courtesies, not merely to avert still more costly war, but to promote the interests of prosperity.

Your foreign relations, Miladi, are scarcely less complicated than those of the Government, and they are, or ought to be, just as important a part of your concern as the Government's foreign relations are of its concern. Your domestic peace depends very largely on your foreign relations (and by your foreign relations I mean all your relations outside your immediate home), and no less than the Government of a country must

you maintain not mere neutrality, but gracious amenities, with your neighbors, and depend on them to give you what you lack and take from you of your abundance.

Now, what are your foreign relations, Miladi? They are, or ought to be, of three kinds—your relations with your superiors, your relations with your equals, and your relations with your inferiors. Each of these relations has its own contribution of influence; each is necessary in the development of your character.

By your "superiors," I do not mean your social superiors alone, but all who are above you in wisdom, in ability, in goodness—all from whom you can learn anything, all to whom, for any reason, you can look with reverence or respect. And there can be no better measure of your own moral stature than the number of persons you honestly, heartily admire and look up to. The surest token of the "little" mind is its unwillingness to pay proper deference.

Do you remember how you had to wrestle with Hulda to get her to show you any marks of respect? How your blood boiled at her sullen

unwillingness to address you by name, or answer "Yes, Ma'am"? She would serve you, for hire, but she wouldn't even pretend to respect you, and you had worked so hard to earn Hulda's respect, her affectionate regard, it was no wonder you were hurt. "Hulda," you said, "in the old country didn't you address your mistress by name? Did you talk 'at her' as if she were the town pump, and had no name or title?" And, "No," said Hulda, sullenly, but went on to remind you that in *this* country everybody is a lady, "one is yust so good as other." "Very well, Hulda," you went on to say, "I treat you in a ladylike manner; now, why can't you do as much for me?" But did Hulda take the lesson to heart? I'll venture to say she didn't. Hulda's ignorance is just hopelessly dense enough to be impenetrable to the idea that the first mark of a lady is not a Poppy Hat or an imitation feather boa, but a gentle courtesy. Certainly one would never expect her to realize that the supreme evidence of a cultured heart and mind is in the number of things one can see in other persons to admire.

Inspiration comes to us when we admire something superior to ourselves, and many of the finest joys of human association come only when we can carry our conscious weakness of some sort to one who is strong in that very particular wherein we are most lacking. There is nothing more delicious than leaning one's whole weight against some one who is big and strong and who gives willingly of his vigor to reinforce the weary or the weak; but that way danger lies, too, Miladi,—the danger of becoming a parasite on some sturdier person's moral or mental or physical courage. You must give yourself the spiritual benefit of association with persons superior to you, if not in every way, at least in ways corresponding to your largest needs; but you must be very, very watchful not to over-depend. Your relations with your superiors are in the nature of food, then, of reinforcement. Your relations with your equals and inferiors, plus the benefit to yourself, are your accounting for all the inspiration that has been delivered unto you.

And by your relations with your inferiors, dear Miladi, I do not mean with Hulda alone, but with

all such as are weaker than you in any particular, whether through youth or gift of God or circumstance. The capacity for admiration is the beginning of great loveliness of character, but the capacity for tenderness, for compassion, is its supreme flower. Ah, me! Don't you remember how, when we were children, you and I, and dreamed dreams of great ladyship, we thought disdain was the hallmark of the lofty, and never, never imagined that it is the brand of the underbred? We know better, now. We have been about the world a bit and have met some really great ladies, and we know that the greater they are, the less they disdain; the more they find excuses for things being not what they should be.

If there's any disdain among the great it's disdain of snobbery, "the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn," as Tennyson put it. And if there's any pride among them it's the pride of *noblesse oblige*, of tender considerateness growing daily with every increase of power. And as for you, dear Miladi, what a wealth of association is yours with your inferiors—with childhood, which looks up

to you in everything and never suspects how reverently you regard it; with the train of those that serve you, Hulda and the woman who washes your clothes and the boy who brings your groceries, and the whole, endless line of those whose work in life calls them to serve you, at one time or another, in some capacity; and then with those of your friends and neighbors who lean on you for support of some kind. There is the little bride next door, who grew up in a motherless home, and who comes in to you with her small perplexities, looking for your counsel. And there is the woman you know who has lost her baby, and who comes so often to see you and draw on your sympathy that she has come to know as unfailing. Yes, and there are a thousand and one others who need you, who depend on you, whose weakness and need you carry on your heart all the time. Ah, *rich* Miladi! This is your coronet! This is the glow and gleam of your great ladyhood! You will say that I am fond of quoting Stevenson. I am. But do you know this, that he said about *you*: "So long as we love, we serve; so long as we are loved by

others I would almost say we are indispensable; and no man is useless while he has a friend."

Your relations with your superiors develop you in admiration and emulation, your relations with your inferiors develop you in gentleness, in sympathy, in tenderness; you have a hold above and below, and are "balanced," and this helps you greatly in your relations with that considerable proportion of your social world which stands pretty much on a level with you. Your relation with no man, woman, or child is altogether one-sided. It may be that sometimes when you give, your joy in giving is followed by the hurt of inappreciation, but if you've had the proper spirit in the giving the joy will outlast the hurt. At any rate, you get something, either of good or ill, from every association; but in your association with your equals you live a little more on the basis of even exchange than in your association with those above or below you. True, the people who stand on your plane in almost every particular of endowment and environment and age and achievement, may come, by a turn of fortune's wheel or a sorrowful happening, to be in very

bitter need of you in some way, or you may come, in your life, to need them or look up to them, so that all your points of equality are as nothing before your point of inequality. There is no stability in life, we know. But, however the personnel may change, there is always a part of your relationship that has to do with those who are on just about an even footing with you, and these relations are of their own peculiar value in your economy of "foreign affairs." Those who are stronger than you, bend to you, and to those who are weaker, you bend; but these, who are neither weaker nor stronger, teach you the value of compromise, of courteous amenities. The good that one gets from his equals is by no means so great as that he gets from his inferiors and superiors; still, it must not be despised.

We mustn't "lean" too much, lest we grow parasitical, and we mustn't let others lean too much on us, lest they be pauperized, materially or spiritually, and lest we be undone by giving faster than we take in. In these relations, as in those nearer relations which I wrote about in our last chapter, one must struggle for life as con-



scientiously as he struggles for the life of others, and must have superiors of many sorts who are sustaining and inspiring him, while he seeks to live the life of benevolence. You can't nourish the little baby at your breast, Miladi, if you don't eat; you can't feed your little child's spirit if you don't keep your own spirit fed; and you can't be a good Samaritan to the poor man fallen among thieves unless you've strength enough to pick him up and put him on your own beast and take him to an inn, and unless you have the two pence to pay the landlord for his care.

Now, I wonder, Miladi, if it has helped you any, to review your relationships in this way? It takes so much diplomacy to manage even one woman's world, doesn't it? We can't just go on, meaning well but not thinking; there's too much to consider. And in the world of the spirit we have to use, to some extent, the ways of the world commercial; we have to keep a watchful eye on the "larder" and know where to go for what we need, and we have to maintain economic independence by contributing of our own effort to the world's product, and we must know where to mar-

ket our wares as well as where to buy; and with it all, we have to maintain ambassadors at foreign courts and entertain them in our own—to concede all the things that make for good-will among peoples. One can't "drift" in the current of international politics, or in the current of human affairs. One must have a policy, well chosen, and well lived up to. It is the price of peace and of prosperity, two things for which all mankind longs, but which too few, as I shall point out in my next chapter, try to come by honestly.



# *Paying the Price*



## CHAPTER VIII

## PAYING THE PRICE



IT IS the attitude one takes toward the world, far more than any abilities he may possess, which gives significance to his life." I put the sentence in quotation marks because it is the sentence in which Harrison Blake framed a very common thought, and as a sentence I do not see how it can be improved upon.

"The attitude one takes toward the world," Miladi! And this attitude, I take it, is largely expressed in that universal pursuit, the quest of happiness. The quest of happiness is as old as the world, and as universal as life, and yet, over against most records of the quest is written "failure." It looks, at first glance, as if something were "out of

joint," does it not? Well, something is! And for some thousands of years philosophers wise and otherwise have been busy discovering what it is that is wrong, and converting others (if they could) to their theories. Doubtless, too, for some thousands of years after you and I have finished our questioning and passed on into understanding, the quest of happiness will be pursued and discussed in just the same old way. There is substantially nothing new about it, these hundreds of years; it stands to-day pretty much as it stood when the world was young. Yet it is a subject concerning which every one is not only privileged but in duty bound to philosophize, and it is this philosophy of each one of us, this attitude toward the world's universal quest, "far more than any abilities he may possess, which gives significance to his life."

You've heard a dozen women discuss bread-making. "The only way to make good, light bread," says one, emphatically, "is to set your sponge over-night." "Nonsense!" protests another, "my mother made the best bread I've ever

eaten and she never set a sponge at all, but moulded her dough to the proper consistency in the first place." "It doesn't matter about the sponge," says a third, "if you use potato yeast. No woman can make decent bread with store-bought, condensed yeast." "Oh, oh, oh!" cries a chorus of contrary opinion. And, doubtless, every woman of the dozen makes excellent bread, each by her separate recipe.

It's a good deal the same way with theories of life, Miladi. And yet we mustn't forget that there are certain requisites in all good bread, and certain principles of all good life. Leaven is only alcohol and carbonic acid gas, whether it is the leaven of the ancients (which was old dough, hoarded until it had fermented), or potato-brew, or powder in a can, or yeast in a tin-foiled cake from the grocer's; and bread is only leaven and flour and moisture, duly fermented and moulded and fired, the fundamentals of its manufacture as old as the world, almost. The fundamentals of happiness, I dare say, are about as few and as simple and as susceptible of various manipulations, all with good results.



The leaven wherewith many men have sought to leaven their various lives and to redeem the heavy weight of experience from fate to fortune, is of countless kinds, but the principle of them all is older than written records. I have no wish to particularize, Miladi. I would not be as those who write cookbooks and in all recipes calling for baking-powder say, "One heaping teaspoonful Blank's perfection baking-powder." I have no "only way" to urge. All I want to do is to call your attention to one or two plain little facts of our common quest, which are so little and so plain that they are wondrous easy to overlook.

There are so many of you, Miladi, as I have said before! And you are traveling, presumably, a thousand different routes to your hearts' desires. I cannot possibly overtake you all on your separate roads, each at your present point of sojourn, but, thanks to the miracle of print, I can hail a great number of you, and what I want to say to you in this little chapter is this:

Happiness comes at a price, Miladi, and the price **MUST** be paid! The reason "failure" is written over against the record of so many quests

is because the seekers have not paid their dues. It is the business of every one to find out, as nearly as he can, what kind of happiness he is willing to pay for, and then cheerfully to pay, or cheerfully to go without. For instance:

Mrs. X. has a palatial home; it is the envy of every woman she knows; the contents of the Japanese room alone cost fifty thousand dollars and represents years of collecting. Mrs. Y. lives in a hotel; true, she pays eight thousand dollars a year for her suite of apartments, which she occupies about one-fourth of the time, but when she visits Mrs. X. she feels a very poor and possessionless person.

"I do envy you, my dear!" she exclaims, wistfully, to Mrs. X.

"And I envy you," exclaims Mrs. X., laughing. "Your life looks so beautifully care-free to me. True, you don't live in a kind of private art museum, but neither do you carry on your shoulders the delinquencies of eleven maids and five men servants, and the weight of some hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of paintings and furniture and bric-a-brac. Of course, I like

my house; of course I'm proud of my collections of lovely things, but oh! the burden of it all! This morning the housekeeper came into my room, pale as a ghost and evidently frightened half out of her senses; one of the parlor maids had broken a simply priceless piece of old Satsuma which she was dusting. When I saw the damage that was done I could have cried myself sick; it was a piece we bought on our wedding trip in Japan, and precious to us beyond its intrinsic worth. But the poor girl who had done the mischief was in hysterics, the housekeeper was beside herself with anxiety and I couldn't say a word. Gloom reigned in the house all day. The servants went about looking afraid to breathe lest some other ill befall, and it all 'got on my nerves' so, I fairly loathed my treasures and wished I might live in some cloister cell and have peace of mind instead of bric-a-brac."

Mrs. A. has five little children. She is a most devoted mother, but she seldom gets far from her nursery and sometimes she envies Mrs. B. (just a little!) because she can go about so much with Mr. B. If Mr. B. has to go to California on

business, Mrs. B., who has no family, shuts up the house and goes with him. If Mr. A. has a vacation, Mrs. A stifles her regrets and keeps back the tears until she has assured him for the fortieth time that she couldn't possibly have a moment's peace if she went anywhere and left the children, and, of course, taking them is out of the question; then, when he is gone, she goes back to her piled-up mending basket and tries to blink away the scalding tears so she can see to darn a hole as big as a pancake in Johnnie's woolen stocking. But on Christmas eve, over at Mrs. B.'s house, Mrs. B (poor woman!) is paying the price of her freedom as she sits alone by the fireplace from whose mantel no stockings will hang that night waiting for Santa. And as she thinks of the merry nursery over at the A.'s, it seems to her that things are very much out of joint.

Miss M. is a beauty; she has a complexion like a rose leaf and eyes as bright as stars and a figure as lissome as a lily-stalk, but dear me! no pale, monkish ascetic ever knew more of the rigors of self-denial than she. She owns a dozen carriages,

but she seldom rides in any of them; she must walk miles every day to keep that slender suppleness and bright color. She's the belle of every social gathering, but she refuses everything to eat and drink, and when she's hungry she eats a slice of rare roast beef or drinks a glass of warm milk. She hardly knows the taste of sweets or entrees, or rich soups or gravies, and if you don't realize how hard a price this is to pay, you've never tried to diet.

Madame N. is a world-famous actress, but the world little knows what it costs her to part from her two little ones and put three thousand miles of ocean, sometimes, between them and her; nor with what a heavy, anxious heart she often bows smiling thanks for tumults of applause.

And so it goes, dear Miladi; and so it ever has and ever will. Some women would rather be as rotund as a barrel and have a complexion like a nether pie-crust than undergo Miss M.'s rigorous abstinence; and some women would rather have no house at all than carry the burden of Mrs. X.'s anxieties. Each one his own way. But let no one think to reach his heart's desire, by any

route, without paying the price to the last penny.

With regard to this price, let me say a word, dear Miladi. Have you ever traveled with a person whose supply of money and notions of spending it were quite different from your own? You, let us say, are willing to take a modest room in a moderate-priced hotel, to eat plainly but substantially and to practise a number of other like economies in order that you may have money to extend your journey as far as possible; you like to take a cab to an art gallery so as to arrive there as little jaded as possible, and you would rather pick up some quaint memento in Milan than go to the Italian opera, which is much the same as in New York. Your friend cannot endure a small, unfashionable hotel, or bear the half-veiled scorn of the innkeeper and his subordinates for occupants of low-priced rooms. She'd rather riot in the incense of deference paid "Parlor Floor X" than own the Sistine Madonna and take a small room, high up, and she'd infinitely rather miss all the art galleries there are, or walk to them, wearily, in a drizzling rain, than hire a cab and

have to economize on her ten-course *table-d'hôte* dinner. How irritated you got with her and how irritated she got with you! All because different things were "worth while" to each of you.

Isn't it true that "affinity" between persons is largely a matter of agreement in this "attitude one takes toward the world," and a willingness to pay the price demanded for the things that they are agreed are "worth while?" And isn't it true that more people are separated and kept apart by the incompatibility of their estimates of life than by any other one thing?

Yet Providence seems to call each and every one of us to journey through life with a variety of persons who are "misfits" for us in this particular, and when we sit down and ponder the thing, we are bound to admit that, much as the heart longs to find joy in one akin to it, life would provide few opportunities of development were it not for "the contrary minded." One must learn when to compromise and when to be firm, when to be tender and when to be strong; must learn to take the better way each time, whether it be his way or another's; and how might one learn to

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decide if ways never diverged, if estimates never varied?

In the quest of happiness, then, in the attitude which we take toward the world, these things it behooveth us to mind:

It is the things we desire that are our best index, and not the things that we have. It is willingness to pay the price of our happiness that gauges our real earnestness to have it. And it is not true that any other person's idea of happiness is "all wrong" because it is not your idea or mine.





*The Fourfold Love of  
Miladi*



## CHAPTER IX

### THE FOURFOLD LOVE OF MILADI



THIS is one of the characteristics of your human relations, Miladi, that it seldom happens that those persons to whom we owe most are they whom we are best able to repay, or that those who owe us the most heavily are also, to any appreciable extent, our creditors. Most of us get in one place and dispense in others; and this is true of a major part of human relations from life's dawn to its close. No one of us can ever repay his parents, no matter how great his filial duty, all his life through; no man's account with a good father and mother is ever "squared." But by and by it comes your turn to lavish love and labor and anxiety on your children who will never repay you, but who will appreciate you as never before

when the cares of fatherhood and motherhood are theirs. And it's the same, in lesser degree, "all along the line," isn't it? Always, you are in debt, for pleasure, for sympathy, for help, for love, even, to some whom you can never pay; and, always, your accounts (not often reckoned, perhaps, but none the less existent) show many and many a person in debt to you from whom you will never collect.

As I write, there comes to my mind a story told of the great Bishop Brooks. Some of his fellow clergymen were discussing him and his many and marvelous gifts. "He seems to have something for every human need," said one; "he has tenderness and strength for the erring, courage and cheer for the faltering, a child-heart for the little children, and a worldly-wise heart for men sore beset. It doesn't matter whether a man is pursued by horrible temptation, or borne down with crushing sorrow, or irritated with dyspepsia, or perplexed over knotty doctrine, Phillips Brooks seems to have the strength that meets his need. He is so big, and so strong, and so good, and everybody leans on him so, I some-

times wonder where he leans, in his turn; it doesn't seem fair for a man to have to bear so many burdens and have none to lay his weariness upon; and yet who is there that could give Phillips Brooks anything?" And none of the clergymen could answer, until a shy little man from a country parish spoke up, reverently, and said, "He has his Lord." The story goes on to tell how abashed all the other clerics were and how Bishop Brooks, when he heard of the little man from the country, asked to meet him and found in him so congenial a spirit and that ever after the two were fast friends.

The Bishop was so great a man that he gave and gave and gave, and those who saw his beneficence wondered where he gathered his supply. And there are men so small that they take and take and no man seeth them dispense again, though doubtless they do, somehow, somewhere. Most of us, however, come midway of the two classifications, and can separate our friends, relatives and acquaintances pretty definitely into two classes, those who need us and those whom we need. It is not given to many of the relation-

ships of the average mortal to be strong in both directions, yet it is a craving of almost every heart to find in one person something answering *all* the needs, both of giving and of getting. There is something about us that can't quite be satisfied with always taking from certain places and giving in others. I believe our souls instinctively love "balance," and well as we may actually balance our giving and getting in opposite quarters, it is hard to *see* that they are balanced, and we crave some one relationship that shall show us our ability to give and take answered at all points by a kindred ability.

There must, of necessity, be something imperfect in a relationship that is all "give" on one side and all "get" on the other, and there must, too, be something not quite satisfying in a relationship that is based on too great equality. All the finer feelings thrive on service, on sacrifice, and the first and ever-foremost wish of love is to be able to "do something" for the beloved; yet a relationship where one loves, and gives, and serves the other, world without end, and without anything like adequate return, is practically never

a happy relationship save in the single instance of parenthood. In that case, Nature seems to have provided that love shall operate in inverse ratio to appreciation; but it is not so in any other case, I venture to assert. Certainly it is not so in the case of any one who deliberately takes much from another that he can never repay, in kind or otherwise. I remember how shocked I was, years ago, when a very wise and a very good old man told me to beware how I put any one under obligation to me. "For," said he, "it's a situation which few persons relish, and if so be that any cannot pay, you stand a more than fair chance of having that one for your enemy." I thought, then, he was cynical; I know better, now. One must give and give and give, of himself, of his time, of his energies, of his sympathy, but he must be exceeding tactful, with it all, and the life of great benevolence, while it is a life of great blessedness, is not an easy life (even where there is the supreme instinct of unselfishness) nor a life of great peace.

We must live our lives to the full, we must learn to take, without feeling beggared, to give



without beggaring, and to live equably with those neither above nor beneath us; but all these separate relations lived to the full do not fill the heart; there is in every one of us a deep, deep hunger for something more, something that is of the essence of all these, with yet something that none of these are, besides. We want some one to cherish and to lean upon, to minister unto and to revere, some one whose peaks correspond to our depressions and whose depressions are just the measure of our peaks, some one whose area of tablelands, too, very nicely matches ours, and withal, some one whose attitude toward life is kin to our own and who adds to all these other things a certain something, indefinable, really, but which we may, for convenience, call "attraction." I call this heart-hunger, dear Miladi, the hunger for the fourfold love.

And by the fourfold love I mean, the love of the inferior for the superior, the love of the superior for the inferior, the love of equal for equal, all these plus something else, that indefinable something which draws two souls together, causing them to discover their complementari-

ness, and which holds them together ever after, in all despite.

I shan't stop to say anything of the danger of mistaking mere attraction for the fourfold love in its completeness, for you and I have each our wholesome fear of that. We have, too, each our conception of the fourfold love. I wonder how much alike they are? Very much, I feel quite sure; superficially they may be different, as you and I, superficially, are different, but fundamentally they are, I believe, the same, just as I believe that in nearly, if not quite all, points we are fundamentally akin. As I said in the first of these little chapters, some of you think of The Brushwood Boy as Andrew, not Georgie, and some of you think of him as James or John; and to some of you the brushwood piles symbolize a quiet, home-leading country lane, and to some of you they are but other names for some crowded city rendezvous. Where love is, are the brushwood piles of your dream; but whatever you call your lover, you find him in the Kipling story, and whatever he calls you, he finds you there instead of Annie and Louise.

And in your fourfold love your points of complement may not be the same as your neighbor's, but the fourfold elements are yours and hers in common, and all mankind's that love.

Perhaps, dear Miladi, you are a little bit of a frail woman, racked with physical suffering; in which case Milord is, I'll be bound, a big, strong man who can gather you up in his arms, like a child, and who *does*, and the blessed thing about it is that while his strength is just everything to you, giving you courage and comfort, unfailingly, your weakness is as much to him, calling out of him a tenderness, a wealth of sympathy, which a sturdy woman would never have developed. And on the other hand, with his great stature and his "wrestling thews that throw the world," he has a warrior's downrightness of mind, blunted by many a blow in the hard world of material combat; you, shut away from the world's shrill strife, have a spiritual fineness, a clearness of vision and quickness of perception on which he relies more humbly than does your little child. He stands between you and all want or harm, and when a poisoned arrow pierces his

breast and he is laid low, you, little, frail woman, are quick to his side to draw the poison with your love, as Queen Philippa sucked death from the wound of the great crusading king.

Perhaps it is you that are most strong, and he whom fate has called to bear some burden of infirmity, of physique or temperament or fortune, in which case, Miladi, I hope that the points of equality between you are very many, and that attraction operates in a degree very strong, for this is a reversal of the natural order, in which love may be most divine but in which it is far more likely to deteriorate into a sort of parasitical weakness on the part of the man and a sort of maternal fetichism on your part. Whatever you do, dear Miladi, if it happens that your points of strength and Milord's points of weakness are contrariwise to the usual order between man and woman, be careful, with your whole might, how you lavish on him beyond his power to return, until you irk him with a sense of obligation which makes him hate you. This is one of the most pitiful and, I am afraid, one of the most common situations in which women find themselves with

regard to men they love: it is the woman nature to lavish her love unreservedly, and it is the maternal nature in all women that makes them, oftentimes, love as mothers do, in inverse proportion to worthiness; but while a mother may love best her scapegrace son, and her love be, at last, his salvation, a woman only at her peril pours out her yearning tenderness on a man her inferior.

A man wants to look up, 'way up, to the woman he loves, to count himself immeasurably her inferior in some respects, and to glory in the counting; but the very foundations of their love rest on his essential manhood and her essential womanhood, and any marked perversion of either tends toward misery. As a matter of fact, the peaks and depressions of plenitude and need, no matter how they complement each other, must be offset by a great quantity of flat-lying lands of the same or nearly the same level. Points of equality are points of tremendous importance in the maintenance of love; "the attitude one takes toward the world," of which we talked in our last chapter, is the chief point of equality, count-

ing for far more than the position one holds in the world. A harmony of estimates touching "what is worth while," a unit of willingness to pay the price for it and enjoy it honestly, these are of supreme moment in the fourfold love.

It's grave business, is it not? this loving! And you can remember the time when you thought it was all a summer day's idyl, a kind of thrilled listening to the poetic whisperings of Milord in spotless white flannels drifting with you in a lazy little boat, 'neath overhanging trees and 'mong lily-pads. Ah, me!

It had always seemed to you, in your girlish dreams, that love, when it came, would bring peace, infinite peace, and the happiness of exaltation; that it would solve all life's difficulties and make everything easy. You never dreamed that love enters only to complicate, to perplex, to offer not fewer burdens but more, not lighter, but heavier, not more security, but less. You had thought of love as the crown of life, a sort of reward of merit, with *Ne plus ultra* written large about its tips; yes, and you thought queens, real queens, wore their crowns all the time, and spent

their lives sitting on their thrones and having their hands kissed! You never suspected how few times in a long lifetime a queen has her crown on her head, how wearisome it might get to sit on a throne, or how many weary vigils a queen may have, praying for light to act for her people's good.

You had imagined love to be an end, never suspecting it to be but a means to an end; you had thought of it as a climax, never suspecting it to be but a starting point; you had looked toward it as toward a haven or harbor, never suspecting that it is only a breath, a spirit breath, to drive you to haven or to rocky shoal according as you are good seaman or bad, or as your destiny might overrule you.

And does love, as you know it, seem less to you than love seemed as you dreamed about it, long ago? Ah, *Miladi*! I don't have to wonder what you will reply.

It means so much more to you now than you ever dreamed it could mean, that you have even been known to think pityingly of younger women of your acquaintance to whom love is still a sum-

mer day's idyl. You think they are scarce entitled to call it love—that fluttering of the senses, that rapt absorption in a being they fondly idealize but do not know. What is it, beside your feeling? you ask yourself, as you glance up from your mending and note, by the aid of the evening lamp, how thin Milord's hair is getting. What do those young things know of their lovers, compared with what you know of the quiet courage, the keen foresight, the tenderness and "dependability" of that man with the thinning hair?

You are no more twain, you two, in very sooth, but one. And you glory in the years that have accomplished that welding. You know, now, wherein he most needs you and wherein you most need him—wherein either of you without the other would have been incomplete. You have "conformed," of course, and so has he. What use is love except as it makes conformity easy? And you have suffered, of course, for what value could love have unless suffering had tried it and found it steadfast? You have stumbled, in your way, and even fallen, but you have



“kept hold of hands,” and please God you’ll still be holding fast when one of you slips out to sea and adventures to the Other Country to make ready for the union without end.

# *Miladi's House o' Dreams*



## CHAPTER X

### MILADI'S HOUSE O' DREAMS



HE CALLED it her "house o' dreams," not because it was to be a house to dream in, but because, for so many years, she had dreamed sweet dreams of the house that was, some day, to all-express her, to embody her ideals of individual and family and neighborly happiness, and to give her, in all her manifold obligations, its perfectly-planned aid. And this is the house Miladi built:

Of course she had always known, or always since she outgrew her childish dreams, that when she built her house she would become involved in a perfect network of decision, but she had spent the years of waiting and hoping, in deciding, and re-deciding, so that when she came to the actual time of building she had a

few of her problems solved—only a few, to be sure, but they “helped.”

For instance, she had balanced long in her mind the attractions of city and country for home life. There was a great deal to be said in favor of both, and Miladi sighed a bit, sometimes, because she could never make herself believe that she could have *two* houses and vibrate between them. Planning would be so exceeding easy, Miladi thought, if one could plan two houses and live in them “turn about,” as one’s mood turned. But with one house, one modest house, the utmost she could hope for, she wavered a long time before she placed it. Milord’s business was in the heart of the city, but that need not keep his home there, for commuting, dear knows, has extended, of late years, to include about half of every city’s toilers. So Miladi “looked on this thing, then on that,” while she set down item after item on each side of her balance sheet. (Milord was a busy, absorbed man, glad to leave nearly all the details of his home life to capable Miladi.) She was a social little Miladi, and liked a central and easily acces-

sible location, so that her home might see a good deal of her friends. And she loved what we call the advantages of the city, the concerts and theaters and shops and the like, which commuters, she knew, came to avail themselves of less and less as the weariness of catching trains grew upon them. On the other hand, her soul longed for flower-culture, and a "wee bit" vegetable bed in the back yard, and a Jersey cow, and chickens, and a collie dog and a maltese cat, and big trees to swing hammocks beneath, and smooth green turf for the children to roll on, and a big, dim attic for them to play in, rainy days, with the lullaby of pattering drops on the roof; she longed for brilliant crackling, driftwood fires, on crisp Fall nights, with apples roasting on the hearth and little folk gathered in the inglenook.

There was a deal of choosing to do, almost more than she was capable of, for there were delights and discomforts on both sides, but the country finally carried the day, and after many prayerful ponderings and two-score excursions to two-score spots, each with its share of charms, there came a

memorable time, oh! a *very* memorable time, when the site for the house o' dreams was bought, and plans for the house itself were fairly under way.

At one time in her life Miladi, schooled from infancy in economy, had decided that when it came to economy in the house o' dreams, it should deal with the outside, first. She cared little indeed to impress the neighbor or the passers-by, she told herself, with a proud little toss of her head, and where skimping was necessary, it should be "all on the outside." But by and by she had a riper wisdom on this point, and, luckily, it was before their plans had reached the stage of paper but were still hovering very much in air. By the time the architect was chosen and instructed, Miladi had come to have a larger sense of her obligations to the world outside her home's four walls, and to feel that, in a measure, she must build for the wayfarer and the neighbor across the way, as well as for Milord and her children and her friends and herself. She studied architecture very earnestly, in those years of dreaming and planning, and little by little her

sense of the obligation of beauty extended from within, out, so to speak, and she came to see that every ugly house is a blot on a community and an affront to many people who, even if they are strangers, are entitled to the due consideration of the gracious heart.

Miladi recollected a thousand glimpses she had had in passing of as many different homes, and the impressions they had left on her; how the coldly formal ones, all too plain to the eye, had chilled her, how the ugly ones had made her shudder, how the squalid ones had depressed her with their misery, and how the beautiful and cheery ones had given her a swift, rejoicing thought that happy people lived within. And she determined that her house o' dreams should be like a lovely countenance, to the passers-by, and say to one and all, "a bright, serene soul lives here." "No, I won't economize at the expense of the strange wayfarer," said Miladi, "I'll try to give him a fleeting encouragement, try to make him say, as he passes my house, 'There is somewhat, in there, that is happy and wholesome. Thank God for it.' "



This Miladi tried to do, and also she tried to plan her house's exterior so that it should conform, in a manner, to the styles the little neighborhood had already set. She felt that her house, like her dress, must conform, in general, to the standards of her environment, but that her taste and skill must be manifest in the way she transused her conformity with her individual spirit. She realized that it is as opposed to all that is right and fine-feeling, to interject a many-turreted, three-story green limestone house into a street made beautiful with low-eaved, rose-embowered cottage homes, as it is to go among a company of sweet, muslin-clad girls, wearing a complicated costume of brocades and furs and laces. And so her ideas of what kind of a house she wanted to build had a good deal to do with her selection of a locality, along with the locality's offerings in the way of church and school, its convenience for Milord's transportation to and from his work, its general healthfulness, and the character of the neighborly life it was likely to afford Miladi and those whose happiness and welfare she held in her keeping.

One of the weightiest considerations leading Miladi to set her house o' dreams in a suburb, where land was comparatively cheap, was her ardent desire of certain kinds of spaciousness not to be thought of in a city house, unless it were one of those built on the plan which has suggested the simile, "living in a chimney." Miladi didn't care the least bit in the world for a parlor, and the *two* parlors of the average city house, or even flat, were a willful waste of precious space which she could not condone.

The lords of ancient castles entrenched themselves and their families in the innermost of a series of defences 'twixt them and the outside world; there were many, even of their own retainers, who got within the outer walls, but never got within the inner defences surrounding the keep; and there were many who sat at meat with the lord in the great baronial hall who were never admitted to the apartments where his family life was lived. Now, Miladi did not plan her house o' dreams as a castle of defence from the world, but she had some of the old castle-builder's notions; like him, she designed her residence

to give a certain hospitality to all who came on peace intent, but like him, too, she set up a series of defences between the casual comer and the intimacy of her family life. So she builded in this wise:

In summer, her drawbridge was always down,—her broad, inviting porch, with its wicker furniture, its pots of plants, its tables strewn with magazines, welcomed all comers. She never sat on it unless she was in a mood to dispense cheer to any who might come for it, and the rest of her family gradually fell into the same way, but the porch was always inviting, and Hilda was taught to say, if Miladi was not at home, that Miladi would be glad to have her caller rest a bit, and many a tired woman on a round of visits, or weary girl bringing home a bundle, sat and rocked in Miladi's chairs and read her magazines and perhaps drank a glass of lemonade brought out by Hilda, and went on her way refreshed.

In winter, the drawbridge let down at the touch of a bell, in answer to which summons Hilda would admit the stranger into the big hall of the house, a great, square apartment, floored and

ceiled and paneled in brown, weathered oak. Facing the door the shining brown staircase ascended, broad and handsome, to an ample landing, midway the two floors, where it separated, and became two narrower flights reaching the chambers above. Above the landing, pouring its rich, warm lights into the hall below, was a beautiful stained glass window (Miladi's supreme extravagance), and beneath it were wide window seats piled with cushions. In the hall, at one side, was a fireplace; such a fireplace! Ample is hardly a big enough word to describe it, nor is there any word cheery enough to picture its log fires. It had no elegance about it, no modern mantle above it, it was just, literally, a place for fire, with an enormous red-brick chimney reaching to the low ceiling, and inglenooks on either side. It had a wide brick hearth, too, flanked by a rug whereon it was delicious to lie, full length, if you were aged about eight or ten, and just in from an hour's skating. There was nothing fine in this hall; no dispensable knickknacks, nothing that could be easily harmed; it was a place to which one could bring "the

fellars" (if one was eight or ten) even if there was a bit of snow sticking to the heels of their stout little boots; and it was a place where a cold little messenger boy who had trudged the snowy mile from the station, could sit and warm himself and eat a big apple or a handful of nuts in comfort and depart wishing messages were oftener directed to this house. To the right of the hall was the living-room, a big, cheery room dedicated to the family life. It had a fireplace, too, though smaller than that in the hall, and wide window seats, and big easy chairs for big folks and little easy chairs for little folks, and a center table with a deep-rose shaded lamp and a heterogeneity of other things—Miladi's mending basket or embroidery, Milord's briar pipe and his tobacco jar, Janey's littlest doll and the new dress in process of making for it, and Janey's brother's arithmetic and parchesi board. Intimate friends who called were brought into this living room. Those who were not quite so intimate or those whose society any one of the family wished to enjoy *tete-a-tete*, were taken into the library, across the hall. This quiet room breathed the serenity of good and

great books. There was a beautiful "ordered" air about it on which nothing was allowed to obtrude. Janey could come in here and cuddle in a cosy corner and lose herself for hours in Grimm's fairy tales or *Little Women* or *Robinson Crusoe*, but she could not bring her *Arabella's* doll-rags here, to snip and sew, nor her *Rose Amelia's* tea things to "play party." And Janey's brother could bring his distracting decimals in here, or come in here and forget them in the charms of the *Three Musketeers*, but he could not bring "the fellers" hither, nor were he and Janey at liberty to play *parchesi* in this room. *Miladi* would take her embroidery out on the porch, in the summer, but she never thought of bringing it in here. This was not the room for work or for play, but for quiet conversation or for quiet reading. And it was as much used as any room in the house, although used differently from any other.

The dining-room ran "crossways" the width of the house, back of living room and library. It was one of the chief prides of *Miladi's* heart, and I wish I could describe it to you in detail, but I

can't; it would take pages on pages! Not that it was so elegant, for it wasn't; but that it was so carefully and so beautifully thought out in every least little particular, from the exact height of the shaded light which overhung the table and illumined it with a soft radiance, but spared the eyes of those who dined, to the French windows opening onto the back garden, with its peach trees and currant bushes and asparagus beds, and which always stood open, of a summer morning, when the breakfast was spread.

I've been a long time coming to the kitchen, but Miladi wasn't. It was one of the first things she planned. If you were that kind of a caller whose errand took you to the back door instead of to the front, you had no reason to regret it. The kitchen was in a wing by itself, and had windows on three sides, five windows in all, and three doors, and a pantry fully as big as some folks' whole kitchen. It was something like twenty-five feet square, was this kitchen, and it had a huge brick chimney and fireplace not unlike that in the front hall, and its inglenooks and broad, brick hearth. This was between two

windows on one side of the room, and next to it, in a corner, with a window on either hand, Hulda had a rug laid, and there was her rocking-chair and a little table where she could keep her bit of sewing that Miladi taught her how to do. All the windows were hung with short curtains of snowy swiss at fifteen cents the yard, and set with geraniums whose green and red, "against the light", would have sent happy little thrills through any artist. Then there was the big range, and the shining copper boiler, matching the equally shining copper teakettle. This was Miladi's domain as much as Hulda's, and it was the children's, too! Many and many a winter evening, while the sleet drove against the windows and the wind howled in the wide chimney, the children of larger and smaller growth hung with rosy faces about the open fire, roasting apples or nuts or popping corn. And scarcely a day but Miladi spent some goodly part of it in her sunny kitchen, the sleeves of her gingham morning dress rolled up above her dimpled white elbows, her hands deep in the snowy suds washing out some delicate bits of napery, or stained with the juices of the



fruits she was preserving, or whitened with flour as she interestedly tried a new receipt, Hulda standing, intent, at her side. Miladi, you see, loved her kitchen quite as enthusiastically as she loved her dining-room or her library, and rated a perfect omelet not at all below a perfect essay, so how could Hulda be ill-content to stay there, or feel that her station in life was any more menial than the measure of her efficiency?

"Downstairs, social life; upstairs, individual life," was the way Miladi put it. One of her strongest theories concerned the need of every individual for a place all his own, a holy of holies according to his own creed. She thought one of the worst horrors of poverty is the crowding it entails, the lack of privacy its victims suffer. She could never quite realize that poverty's victims frequently, if not usually, like herding close together, and choose it in preference to decenter living when the alternative is open to them. "There could hardly be a house with enough bedrooms for me," said Miladi, and built hers as generous in that particular as her purse would allow.

She had long cherished her ideal of a bed-

room; it might be big or it might be little, but it was distinctly a place to sleep or, at most, to rest. It was a place that was shut up and quiet all the time when not in requisition for rest purposes; it was a place where no clutter ever entered, where no feverish activity or anxiety ever charged the air with heaviness and unrest.

When she built her house o' dreams Miladi built herself such a bed-room. It was not very large, but its windows opened almost straight into the arbor of a great tree where twittering birds built their nests and reared their nestlings. The woodwork was snowy white and the floor, with only a single rug by the bedside, was dark, highly polished oak. In the bow-window, opening outward into the arms of the great tree, there was a little, low, old-fashioned rocker and a small, quaint old table which had belonged to Miladi's grandmother; it held Miladi's candle, in a dainty Dresden stick, and a favorite book of the kind one carries to one's chamber and hugs to one's heart, in the effort to extract some of its cheer, some of its patience, some of its sweetness. The bed was a mahogany four-poster, with beauti-

ful linen sheets and slips, delicately redolent of lavender, and snowy to the point of lending a pervading purity to the apartment; so, too, the fringed counterpane, the valance and tester, and the simple white swiss curtains at the windows. Of other furniture there was only a stationary chair (of mahogany like all the rest) and a high chest of drawers which a modern generation calls a chiffonier. On top of it, in tall silver candlesticks which had been in her grandmother's dowry, stood, straight and slim, two high candles of white wax, and between them swung a quaint old rectangular mirror.

Not a knickknack had Miladi's chamber, not a picture; it was a picture in itself! Next to it she had her bathroom and dressing room combined, with all her manifold little trinkets and accessories of a dainty toilet, and beyond that, again, a bright, sunny room with a polished, shining floor and a cutting table and a sewing machine and a stand full of flowering plants and a canary in his gilded cage, and her little writing desk in one corner, and all the paraphernalia of her busy, womanly life. Here was where she kept The

Littlest Boy, hour after hour of his babyhood, playing or sleeping under her watchful eye while she sewed or wrote or rocked and hummed and mended. And here she sat with Janey beside her on a wee rocker of her own, and directed the tiny fingers how to turn down a hem, how to fell and overcast and shirr, Janey's numerous family of dolls profiting thereby.

Now, Milord had been a college man, and like most college men liked an amazing clutter in his room. It made him happiest when he could have all his possessions in plain sight. He liked his nine-and-twenty pipes festooned across the chimney piece and flanked by his cherished bayonets from the battlefield of Gettysburg; he liked the photographs of a score of "the fellows" always in evidence, and he liked to keep his forty-three string ties hung on a line stretched across his closet door. He had been brought up by an indulgent mother, and he had a deep-rooted dislike to putting anything away, and it was a loving little jest between him and Miladi which of them would suffer most if they had to keep their belongings in one room.

Janey's room and her brother's were no less opposed to Miladi's ideas of restfulness and comfort, but having showed them her way and found that it did not appeal to them, she allowed them their way, even when, temporarily, it was Janey's way to decorate her room with an immense fish-net and stick a photograph in every mesh,—with reckless disregard of dusting troubles. Miladi noticed, however, that rigid insistence on Janey's keeping her own room clean soon knelled the doom of the fishnet.

Space fails me, utterly, in which to tell of the guest room, of Hulda's and Hilda's rooms, over the huge kitchen, or of the vast reaches of the great, dim attic, with its shadowy corners under the eaves and its immense, smooth floor where the children dance and play to the music of pattering rain.

Space fails, too, in which to tell of Miladi's garden, and her beautiful, cool cellar, with its rows on rows of crocks and glasses and jars, its vivid little color-spots of piled red apples, with here and there a yellow pumpkin or stack of golden oranges or hanging cluster of deep purple

grapes, carefully transferred to storage from her own vines, outside.

Ah, but it was a house to dream of! And never any one entered it, I'll be bold to say, but went his way, forever afterwards holding it in his affectionate recollection as a beautiful type of all that can be expressed in a home.



# *Conflicting Tendencies*





## CHAPTER XI

### CONFLICTING TENDENCIES



IN our last chapter, dear Miladi, we wrote about the house o' dreams. Somewhere, in air or in reality, you have a house o' dreams, each of you. Perhaps in detail it is not at all like the one I described to you, but it doesn't matter, much, about the detail, so long as the general purpose of each builder is to build a home that shall both inspire and recreate, nourish and refresh, delight and soothe its occupants, body and mind and soul, and extend some degree of this same gracious ministry to all who come nigh it.

But before you could build your house o' dreams, how much you had to learn, did you not, Miladi? Not only about real estate values and architects'

plans, and contractors' bids; about plumbing and interior finishing, and sodding, and the relative values of stone and cement walks; not only about these material economies of home-building, I say, but about the spiritual economies which underlie the others,—or ought to!

You and Milord did not find out, all at once, the full strength of the fourfold love, did you? It took you some years, while you were working and waiting and planning for the house o' dreams, to adjust yourselves to the fact (which at first you but dimly apprehended) that you two were "not like to like, but like in difference." And it is only in recognition of this fact, and in adaptation to it, that a home can be builded and maintained.

At first, you were so bewildered, so hurt, when you found that you and Milord had conflicting tendencies! Do you remember? You were terrified, lest it mean the absence of love. Ah, poor little Miladi!

Now, in the world of matter, achievement is everywhere accomplished just by the operation of conflicting tendencies. Everything in Nature has to overcome in order to fulfill its unequivocal

destiny. Not a tiniest humming-bird wings the air of "the June-blue heaven," but triumphantly resists the laws of gravitation and friction. And not the smallest grain of sand is shifted from point to point on the seashore but by energy which has first overcome the static resistance of the grain to movement.

Does it argue discord in Nature, because tendencies operate against one another? Not at all! The bird beats its wings in flight, then, with pinions spread, drops back to earth again by the power of gravitation; the sand crystal shifts, with wind or wave, then resumes, for a time, its static resistance. Nature depends on alternations for her harmony, yet the world has never seemed to feel that God intended harmony when, of his creatures in his own image, "male and female created he them," making them, by nature, of conflicting tendencies.

Womankind has made some effort to unify these tendencies, in defiance of God's original plan, but most of the world has come to see that not that way wisdom lies, nor yet in frictional resentment that such tendencies exist.

Come, now, let us reason together: Women have learned many things, in the course of their invasion of man's industrial realm. If only men might fill the places of women for a season, we should have a complementary knowledge and sympathy that ought to put the whole situation on the basis of the "statelier Eden" Tennyson wrote of; but that being improbable, not to say impossible, let us look at the old, old foundations of "incompatibility" with the eyes of a woman who has been both home-maker and bread-winner. For if the broader understanding has come to be ours, why, *noblesse oblige*, ours must be the main efforts toward the renewal of such another Eden as the world knew before woman's desire for a wider knowledge drove her and hers out of the first Paradise.

The community of interests between a man and his wife are many. Both are equally interested, though possibly in different ways, differently expressed, in their common home; in their children; in the health and welfare of their peculiar little family and friendly circle; perhaps in their church affairs; not unlikely, if the wife is a broad-

minded woman, in their civic interests, their national affairs, in the same engrossing books, in their travels together; in almost any case, they are commonly interested in plans for the eventide of life, when the children shall have gone to homes and interests of their own, and he and she who began life together with no treasure but love, shall together approach its end with only love to bear them company.

Yet, notwithstanding all these, the divergence of interests begins soon to be manifest and continues, if not to the end, at least through active life until, in extreme second childhood as in first, sex differences are not apparent. In little comediettas on the stage we see this beginning of divergence put within the confines of the honeymoon. In life, we often see it begin to be evident as soon as the first rapturous ecstasy of the betrothal has given place to a slightly more rational attitude toward mundane affairs. Miladi's jealousy of Milord's club, or of his business friends, or of his family ties, frequently begins long before marriage; so, too, his misunderstanding of her attitude. Nothing but lukewarmness

and incipient infidelity can Miladi see in Milord's cheerful willingness, not to say eagerness, to go to dinner with an old college chum of his whom she has never seen, on a night when she had secretly hoped her lover would take her to the latest sword-and-cloak drama. And nothing but morbid selfishness, pitiful to behold, can Milord see in Miladi's attitude when at last, after pouts and sulks and perchance tears, he discovers the astounding reason therefor.

However, the forces that plead for union prove stronger than those that lead apart, and Milord and Miladi are married. For a brief space two souls have but a single thought; then one of them ventures on the incredible perfidy of an individual opinion. 'T is the little rift within the lute. Perhaps it happens during the furnishing of the first dovecote (not the house o' dreams, but the first step theretoward); perhaps Milord quite innocently objects to Miladi's proposition to fit up the closet under the stairs of their wee house as a smoking-room for him, "in Oriental style, you know!" Perhaps he pleads that he intends to sit by her, under the evening lamp, he with

his pipe and paper, she with her needlework or book, and Miladi, notwithstanding the implied compliment to her society, is aghast at the idea of pipe-smoke clinging to her immaculate white curtains and rose-pink parlor-suit. The feminine tendency to the ornate and the masculine tendency to the comfortably utilitarian here come into conflict, and as the breach widens, Miladi is confirmed in her suspicion that Milord was a trifle rudely brought up, and Milord begins to fear that Miladi is that chief dread of all wholesome mankind, a "finicky" woman. In the end,—or in the beginning, for concession is not an end but a beginning,—Milord probably adopts the closet under the stairs; not improbably he is glad, sometimes, that he has it to go to.

Comes, then, a night when the play-house novelty of the new dining-room, with Miladi in her trousseau finery to pour the coffee for him, has worn off a little,—just a little,—and business has been so absorbing that, somehow, he hasn't spent the day wishing 'twere "going home time." About dusk, a man on whom he has called three times that day, hoping to close an important



"deal," comes into the office and says: "Sorry to have missed you, Smith, but if you'll come out and take a bite of supper with me, I'll talk that thing over with you. I've got to go to Boston at eleven-thirty to-night." "A bite!" how innocent it sounds! But what will Miladi say? However, what will Miladi say if he misses his commission on the business and cannot buy her the new library table which represents to her, just now, the sum of things desirable? So the "bite" is taken, and the contract made, and "on the strength of it," Milord and his business acquaintance repair to the theater to "put in the time" until the train leaves for Boston.

At home, in the dovecote, Miladi has had a busy afternoon. She has donned a kitchen apron and rolled up her sleeves and concocted for Milord such a cherry pie as he used to compliment, when he came a-courting, until her cheeks grew red as her cherries. At dinner-time, flushed with pretty expectancy, Miladi puts on the little rose-colored cashmere dress that Milord most admires, and flutters about her tiny dining-room in loving fastidiousness over details. Dinner hour comes and

goes, and no Milord! When the poor little feast is spoiled by waiting, Miladi chokes down a few mouthfuls for the deception of the lynx-eyed Hulda, then takes her station in the front window, hardly knowing whether it is her choice that Milord be foully murdered in some lonely spot, or basely gone to his club to enjoy himself. She thinks she almost prefers the former, because in that case he might have died loving her. Poor little Miladi! Poor young Milord.

And when, a week later, Miladi's heart is set on going to spend the evening with the Swifts and having a game of cards, whereunto Milord pleads that he is "too tired," her cup of woe is full and it is strange if she does not say, "You weren't too tired to go to the theater with your business friend, last week!"

"Ah, my dear," pleads Milord, "that was so different; I was getting good bread and butter and large-egg furnace coal and a library table out of that man, and the play was restful and inspiring."

"So are the Swifts," retorts Miladi, a trifle hotly.

"To you, dear," quite probably, says Milord; "but you must remember that it is my business to see people all day long; all sorts and conditions of men hack and hew at my nervous endurance until, when night comes, I'm ready for my pipe and slippers and evening paper, or maybe for the distraction of the theater, but not for my 'proud clothes' and perfunctory politeness at the neighbors'."

"And I," cries Miladi, "am just the other way! It is my business to stay at home all day and keep your house, and when the evening comes, and my duties are done, I'm hungry for a little excitement, for a chance to wear my 'proud clothes,' for the sight of stimulating people, in exchange for Hulda and the butcher; in fact, I live through the day hoping for the joys of the evening, whereas you, by your own confession, live in your day, and pay the piper in the evening. I call it most unfair!"

Milord is tempted to ask to whom it is more unfair than to the other, but he doesn't. He either goes to his smoking closet under the stairs, where he is as comfortable as St. Lawrence on

his gridiron, thinking of Miladi's disappointment and the messy thing life is, generally; or else dons his "proud clothes" and proceeds to the Swifts', with the outer demeanor of a modern cavalier and the inner spirit of a medieval martyr.

Now this sounds trifling, but it is the rock on which modern home life struck and wellnigh splintered. Miladi must have stimulus and activity and arena for her prowess apart from Hulda and the butcher. Long ago, Miladi's mother worked far harder at her household tasks than Miladi ever thought of doing, but it was a paradoxical age in which people worked harder yet had more leisure. Their habits of life were different; work was steady and unassisted by modern mechanical devices, but both men and women attempted less incredible feats in proportion to their equipment and powers. They used to have "parties" in those days. Think of it! Parties! Where men and women met in their simple best and amused themselves healthily, heartily, without aid of vaudeville or parlor trickster or high-priced hired song. Amuse-

ments were neighborhood matters, then; who ever hears of a neighborhood now? The city dweller lives in a police or polling precinct; that is his neighborhood; beyond it is out of his neighborhood; but as for neighbors! Who has any, beyond the limits of mere courtesy in passing?

So, when simple, common recreations failed, and the forbidding distances of great cities, the rush and complexity of modern life, kept men, perforce, in a vortex of interests closely allied and left them no energy for other stimulus, women, left too much to the unrelieved friction of Hulda and the butcher, must needs have interests of their own making, outside; hence the women's club of many sorts, legion of women's daytime card parties and teas, and social life generally,—except in the extremes of society like the firemen's ball, and the Patriarchs', providing for people whose lives are so monotonous that they must have social excitement at any cost, and for the people whose lives are so given over to pleasure that they do not have to consider any other thing. But in the great middle grades of society there has been a rather sharp segregation on the

lines of conflicting tendencies in sex, the women uniting to provide excitement and amusement among themselves, since their men would not join them, and the men drifting off to the quiet of their clubs or the diversion of the theater.

But unity of affection and sweet accord cannot be preserved on such a basis. Experiment has proved it. It has proved, too, that though the tendencies of Milord and Miladi conflict, each is right, each has an inviolable right to preservation. Neither Milord nor Miladi must insist too strongly in the defence of rights, however, but each must concede, particularly Miladi! For if the best type of modern woman is coming to see that her home is her stronghold, and is going back thereto with a fine, new sense of her seignorial service, necessarily she must neglect, little by little, many of the hectic amusements of a more restless, uninspired day. Great ladies, alive to the noble obligations of their position, do not have time to play six-handed euchre in the morning and bridge whist in the afternoon. There have, indeed, been ladies greatly placed in the world, who have done so, but they were *mis-*

placed, just as accident of birth has not seldom put a craven or a churl on a kingly throne.

Great ladies are the busiest of mortals. To them all of life looks for the cultivation and regulation of its refinements. Mankind must go to the wars, and the industrial wars of to-day are no whit less exciting, less adventurous, less momentous than were the wars of the middle ages. And as of old, when her knight is at home from the march or the field, his lady, with sweet graciousness, bends all her energy for his rest and his pleasure. And when he must return to the army to fight his good fight, she does not seek to detain him, nor give herself up to bemoaning his absence, for there is much, much, for a great lady to do. Remember, for instance, the life of Vittoria Colonna, than whom no greater lady ever lived, and remember, too, that in Vittoria's time women had, constitutionally and by tradition, far fewer privileges than now; yet how beautifully she exemplified how broad may be a woman's interests, how high her holy office, even in a time when other women were for the most part frivolous, unenlightened and depraved.

Let not Miladi think that if her lord is at the wars and she has the cares of his castle and the vicarage of her retainers and the upbringing of his children to engross her, she has not other interests besides. Every nook and corner of modern life cries out for her gracious touch, for the encouraging patronage of her home, for the healing of her fingers and the cheer of her bright smile. Only, ladies-errant have never come into fashion; free-lances in petticoats, prancing about the world ready to join any standard, are an anomaly the world does not call for. It is Miladi in her castle that we pay our homage to, Miladi reigning in her house o' dreams, and making it a haven of rest, an example of artistic taste, a center of understanding sympathy and of gracious helpfulness.

If Miladi wants an active life, further than Hulda and the butcher, and on a higher plane than morning euchre and afternoon whist, she may have it for the seeking. Broad her interests as her tendencies! So only they radiate from the hub which is her citadel, and are held together by its strength.

And if Milord, war-weary, wants his home a



castle of ease, he must have it, for Miladi, holding the power to grant or to deny, holds with it power's obligation. *Noblesse oblige*, Miladi! Remember that you are not an over-ridden handmaiden, but a gracious chatelaine, and that your motto is "I serve!"

And the beautiful part of all this is, that if Miladi regulates her alternating tendencies toward energy and repose so that, instead of crossing Milord's at every turn, they coincide with his, what harmony will not be there! What chords of major work and soft, sweet, minor rest, will not alternate in the house o' dreams instead of striking simultaneously, with a harsh and jangling sound.

# *The Motherhood of Miladi*



## CHAPTER XII

### THE MOTHERHOOD OF MILADI



IN THESE days, as I write, the press of the country is giving great attention to the jeremiads of certain sages who find cause for alarm in the decrease of the birth-rate and the decline of family life among our well-to-do classes; and almost universally the blame is laid at the door of the American woman.

She is charged with selfish love of ease, pursuit of pleasure and dislike of responsibility. She is pictured at the whist table at ten o'clock in the morning, at somebody's luncheon table at one, at her clubs and receptions throughout the afternoon, and at the theater in the evening. As she will not stay at home to attend to household duties (so

they say) she reduces household demands to the lowest possible degree, and patronizes the family hotels, boarding houses or apartments with cafe service and "cleaners by the hour." In her crowded life, in her crowded quarters, there is no time or place for babies, and the population is in danger, 'tis said; for the hordes of foreign poor multiply rapidly, and the educated, prosperous classes of the American-born tend more and more to childlessness.

It sounds very alarming, and no doubt there is a pitiful degree of truth in it, but I question if there is, after all, much to be lamented. You and I know such women as the indictment describes, but I daresay we are agreed that the world could with reason expect little from the children of such mothers, and may be glad indeed that their selfishness is to so great a degree society's protection against their incompetence to fulfill society's highest function. We may feel a great pity for the idle, card-playing, club-frequenting, dress-worshipping women who go through life without learning the saving power of a baby's helplessness, but we cannot help feeling

glad for the babies who escape such "mothering." Some poor little creatures don't escape it, alas! But, on the whole, I doubt if the ineradicable instinct of reverence for motherhood was ever stronger than it is now, and I think we may safely leave the unmotherly remnant of womankind to the invective of the sages and the scorn of their more enlightened, more uplifted sisters.

In an earlier chapter I spoke of the various things that call women out of the industrial world and back into the world of home, and I think I called the longing for motherhood the chief of these. At first thought that may seem a little overstated, to you, but though I would not say that it is a conscious desire to be a mother that actuates a majority of young women who marry, I will say that I think it is a sort of sub-conscious maternal instinct, quite as much as a more or less blind obedience to the mating instinct. And among women who marry comparatively late in life, not in middle-age, but past girlhood, I am sure the wistfulness to know the sweets of motherhood is greater, in most cases, than the wistfulness to know the sweets of love.

I call to mind a number of women I know who have never married and, as their lives are so nearly done, in all human probability never will; and although some of them do not seem to regret their single lives, on the whole, do not feel that they have missed anything irreparable in missing married love, I can think of scarcely one who does not regret, gently, pathetically, or with a bitter passion which is tragic, having been childless. I have known many women who, growing worldly-wise, grew skeptical about the "fourfold love," but I have hardly ever met with a woman who had reached fifty years of age who would admit that life could offer a woman anything satisfying in lieu of motherhood. When a woman is twenty-five, it often happens that a good many things in the long vista ahead of her glisten with almost equal splendor, but when a woman is fifty she can look back and say what things were worth while.

A great man, who died only a little while ago, was very much beloved by an old lady of immense wealth, which the great man had been instrumental in making a world power for the good of humanity. On a certain occasion the old lady, who had

a superb collection of jewels, wished to make the great man a gift and besought him to select from her caskets. He was not fond of jewelry, and accepted only to please the dear old lady. Passing by diamonds, which he considered too gaudy for his use and too costly, he finally fixed on a modest little red stone which he mentally pronounced "neat" and stowed in his vest pocket, with many thanks to his generous friend. He carried that "neat" little stone in his pocket for some time before he chanced to show it to some one who knew about jewels and their values, and was told that his diffident selection was a pigeon-blood ruby, worth about eight thousand dollars. I often think of this little incident when I hear persons who have reached life's retrospective stage recapitulate; for some, who have tried to "choose big" have failed, lamentably, and some, whose aspirations were modest, have found themselves possessed of treasure almost beyond price.

"Yes, I know I've been successful," said a middle-aged woman, the other day. "I know I've carved myself a niche in the world and held it against all comers. I've been financially inde-



pendent for years, and independent in other ways, too; I've traveled till I'm footsore, seen the best part of all there is to see in this world of ours, and I've worn the highest honors of my profession and enjoyed the companionship of many of the people who are most 'worth while;' but although I'm grateful for all the good that has come to me, there are times, oh! so many times, when I can't seem to see my life in any other light than the light of a failure. If I had it to live over again I wouldn't disdain the pleasures of travel or charming companionship or wide usefulness, if they came within my reach, but I'd never pay the price for them that I have paid in this lifetime. I'd never grow old a second time with no child to call me 'Mother'! Ah, yes, I know what you're going to tell me, that hopes vested in children very frequently bear as much disappointment as any other kind, and of a bitterer sort, perhaps. But motherhood, as it has always seemed to me, consists not in what one gets from one's children, but in what one's children teach one to give and to be. If I had ever hovered over my baby's cradle and felt, to the

full, the mother love, I must needs have been a different woman than I am now, no matter what my baby turned out to be; if I had ever passed, like the little Hebrew Mary, from anxious awe to the spiritual passion of the Magnificat, I should hold kinship with a glorious order of womanhood to which, now, I am alien. Oh, there's been much said about childlessness as an offence against society, but what is that compared to the offence it is against self? Society may get along very well without a child of mine, but *I can't!*"

More times than I can count, in the past year, I have heard other women voice the same cry. They have been of many sorts, these women, from the head of a great college, to a poor little mite of a woman who had made neckties for a living for nigh on seventy years, and who came, only just a short while ago, to the "dreaded brink," feeble, with the weight of eighty-six years, well-to-do, and alone!

We hear a great deal about the attractions of this busy, modern life, with its manifold opportunities for women, and the disinclination of women who are happily occupied to leave it and

immure themselves in the quiet home. But somehow I cannot help believing that women are a vast deal better and truer to their own highest selves than the semi-occasional alarmists give them credit for being. I have heard of little girls who never cared to play with dolls, and it is possible there may have been a woman now and then who did not feel all her noblest nature stir at the thought of motherhood, but I am sure both girl and woman are exceptional. Of course, not all little girls see the same qualities in their dolls, and not all women are capable of the wide-reaching exultation of Mary's Magnificat. There are little girls who love their dollies in proportion to the "dressableness and undressableness" of the doll, and there are some women who seem to love their children on the same plane. But there are, too, little girls who have lavished an intense devotion on rag dolls of the ugliest and least adaptable type, just as there are mothers who have poured out the divinest love on children the least lovely imaginable.

Perhaps it doesn't really matter as much as we sometimes think it does, which grade of affection

## *The Motherhood of Miladi* 195

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a mother knows, so long as the great principle of motherhood, the transfer of the center of gravity from self to another, is accomplished.

I have known women who had never, apparently, a thought above wherewithal they should be arrayed, and when motherhood came to them they lost interest in their own apparel, and fixed their narrow-seeing little intensity on the apparel of their children. It is pitiful; often it is lamentable, for they had husbands who were alienated by their sudden access of carelessness how their looked; but after all, perhaps the first, faint stirrings of the miracle were there; perhaps any creature, however foolish, has set her feet on the first step of the true ascent, when she has ceased to be to herself the most important thing in her world.

There are ways and ways that this transfiguring miracle may be accomplished; far be it from me to say that women who never become mothers are never so transfigured, for many, very many, of the loveliest women the world has known, in all times, have been women who, while full of the spirit of motherliness, never had children of their

own on which to lavish it; but doubtless the great majority attain transfiguration through parental love, and of those who otherwise attain it, this is true: out of their deep wistfulness they were made strong.

The sweetest things ever written about childhood have been written by childless men,—Charles Lamb, Robert Louis Stevenson, J. M. Barrie, James Whitcomb Riley; their longing made them eloquent where other men's realization left them contentedly silent. And it is the "old maids" who voice, most passionately, the emptiness of a life that is not a mother's life.

You, dear Miladi, sitting in your quiet nursery, "between the dark and the daylight," when the last little resisting lids have closed over sleep-laden eyes, may be tired; the baby is getting his stomach teeth, and has been cross as only a distressed, teething baby can be, night and day for a week and more; he is quiet now, but any minute you may hear his fretful wail, and though you are wearied out, your prospects for a night's rest are poor indeed. Little James gave you a bad half hour, this morning, when you thought

he had swallowed his tin whistle, and you were no more than recovered from that when he fell down the cellar stairs and raised a lump as big as a pigeon's egg and as black as an over-ripe plum, just above his left eye. Downstairs, setting the table for supper, is Janey, who is beginning to make her first real, stubborn resistance to your long-cherished ideals for her. You sigh, as you bend your tired back and pick up Jamie's dusty little brown shoes and note the damage the cellar stairs did his tiny trousers. One little fret has piled on another until you are surprised to find yourself irritable, discouraged; your life looks, for the moment, small and rather mean to you, and perhaps you reflect, a little bitterly, that the ecstasy with which you first clasped Janey to you has long been lost sight of in the dull necessity of lengthening her skirts and seeing that she brushed her teeth and made her bed and mended her stockings. This little chapter is for you at just such a time, dear Miladi. It is to say to you that you are not to think because the world sweeps by, very brilliant, very unheeding of you in your quiet corner, that it is undervaluing you,

that its ranks are not full of women who, wearing all the insignia of worldly success, are not envious of you from the bottom of their unsatisfied hearts. After all, nothing really matters much except the thoughts you think, as you go about your homely duties, brooding over your nestlings,—the hopes that you entertain, the principles you lay down, and live up to, and the wise unselfishness of the love you lavish.

If you have known many zealous workers for the public good, you know how, almost universally, after a longer or shorter period of trying to make things better in more immediate ways, they come at last to fasten their whole faith upon the children and to cry, earnestly, that what's to be done must be done with "the little ones." And perhaps you've heard such workers lament that their efforts could only be of small efficacy, because they could not follow the children to their homes! Where the efforts of the sagest leave off, then yours, dear Miladi, begin. You don't realize it, in the semi-isolation of your quiet home life, but if you were in the hurrying world you would know it, would know that, when all's said

and done, you hold the key to all great things in your own tender, capable hand.

Dear Miladi, I am sincerely sorry that these little chapters, these little letters of love, have come to an end. I feel that I have not half, no, not nearly half, improved my privilege of talking to you, in your many homes, and my heart is full of other things I want to say, and better ways I might have said the things I did say. This little chapter on your motherhood has not begun to be even the feeblest likeness of what I had hoped, and prayed it might be. The subject, I am free to confess, is far too great for me. Perhaps I would have been wiser had I not attempted it; but somehow I wanted to take leave of you with such tribute as I could pay to your supreme loveliness, your motherhood, and say to you, reverently, as the angel said to Mary, "Blessed art thou among women."

















*Mil*  
*Clara E. L.*

